NAPOLEON
SMITH

NLQV

45 U

1st Com Sgt
NA (1888-90?)
ARKELL, WILLIAM J
First Lt Wounded 3 12?
Pvt 1888

To Killian Lyons
from Soldat
friend
Ray Hundley

Christmas 1908

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NAPOLEON SMITH,

AUTHOR

A WELL-KNOWN NEW-YORKER.

TORONTO:
HUNTER, ROSE AND COMPANY.

NAPOLEON SMITH

CHAPTER I.

PISTOL: *Qui va la?*
KING HENRY: A friend.
PISTOL: Discuss unto me; Art thou officer?
Or art thou base, common, and popular?

"WHO is your friend?"

I referred to a tall, distinctively American person who stood near the Senator's desk as I entered. His head was drooped sidewise, as though his neck might be deformed, and he held in his right hand the always proper silk hat, while he caressed with his left hand an odorous Havana cigar held lightly between his lips.

A casual glance revealed his apparent standing in society, manifested in faultless clothing and immaculate boots of shining leather. Evidently a man fifty years of age or a man of forty with a large experience. Striking in appearance by the possession of that assurance which comes to a gentleman by success and a sense of power, and to the villain by the force of circumstances as an armor. Altogether a man whose six feet two would arrest attention in any place, and whose face would linger in the memory long after the place of meeting was forgotten.

"Who is your friend?"

"Before answering your question," said the Senator, "I would like to talk with you on a subject leading up to my tall, martial-looking friend. Have a cigar?"

The Senator is not usually loquacious, and with no dread of being bored I lighted a cigar and sat down. Reaching out one long leg he kicked the door shut, and with a sigh of contentment leaned back in his chair and said :

"I should not like you to get the idea that my reason is dethroned or that in some stress of political scheming my mental balance is lost, or more than likely you might jump to the conclusion that last night's meeting at the League Club had finished up a *mania à potu* in regular jim-jams, for I am going to talk strangely."

I knocked the ashes off my cigar, and drew my chair closer. The Senator resumed :

"When the United States celebrated its Centennial anniversary in 1876 a very notable event occurred at the time. Do you recall it ?"

"Possibly," said I, "you refer to the resumption of specie payments."

"Exactly," said the Senator, "and I ask you if you at that time did not think it a strange occurrence. Look back at it now and you will recall the astonished look on the faces of the millions as they pressed into Philadelphia with their well-worn greenbacks and National Bank notes, and found them readily exchanged for gold and silver. No trumpet had been blown before the advancing tide of prosperity. No tedious legislation prepared the minds of the people for the golden flood or the cascades of silver poured into the streets of the city of brotherly love. Foreigners who came to pity our straitened financial condition saw the populace pour out from their pockets great handfuls of gold and silver, and bars and counters were musical with metallic melody. The mint was opened to the inspection of the rabble, and every die was at work, from the golden double eagles dropping into their padded baskets, to the showers of dimes and half-dimes falling in a white silvery mist. No stage on earth ever produced such a telling scene as the United States

played before the nations of the earth in 1876;" and the Senator smiled and sighed with satisfaction.

"Of course," said I, "the gold and silver of the nation was lying hidden, and when confidence was restored it came back into the channels of trade and finance, and resumption was possible.

"Let me tell you," said the Senator, "not one dollar of gold or silver had come back into the channels of trade or finance in 1876. You look astonished, but I tell you a fact. Every coin put into circulation was newly minted and started in its mission from Philadelphia. True, when a golden flood started, then the hoarded millions from the stocking and tea-pot banks were cast into the rising tide, and resumption was secure."

"Pardon me, Senator, but do I understand you that the government voluntarily sent out this stream of precious metals without preparation and without assistance from the people or the banks? You will not think me rude if I take you at your word, and suspect you of temporary aberration of mind."

The Senator lazily knocked the ashes from his cigar and resumed:

"Whether by a fixed law of supply and demand, or by some mysterious influence beyond the realm of law, the fact remains that the precious metals are always found among the nations of the earth in about the same quantities and possessed of about the same value and purchasing power. The fabled mines of Africa did not glut the markets of the world, nor when Hannibal gathered his famed baskets of golden finger-rings at Canæ, did it seem that gold had lost its value. Spain loaded her galleons with gold in South America, and poured its yellow tide into her commerce, and yet it was as valuable as ever. Cortez sent shiploads of it from Mexico, and still it was the kingly metal. Sturdy England took the shining Spanish doubloons brought home by Sir Francis Drake, and it did not lower the monetary thermometer. Australia poured into commerce her auriferous tide, and, like water, it

found its level. California came in with her offering, and later Montana and Colorado, and no apparent fluctuation was seen. The golden springs of Africa dry up, and the fields of Australia are worked out. Califorina becomes an agricultural State, and so the supply comes from different points. We must remember that the arts use up an immense quantity of gold and silver. Large quantities are sunken in the seas and oceans. Much is worn out and lost in the earth. The precious metals will always be precious.

"War always drives the precious metals into temporary hiding, but the return of peace always calls them back into the channels of trade, or they are exiled for a time into more safe and congenial lands. Students of monetary and financial history can always trace the retirement and probable return of the mediums of trade. This has always been predicated of the circulating medium, and events have proved its truth in all but one case."

"And that case?" I said, leaning forward in deep interest.

"And that case I will tell you now. From 1798 to 1815 gold went to retirement, until in all Europe gold coin became an object of curiosity. Of course I need not tell you that during that time France passed through three revolutions. Monarchy went down, the Republic sprang up; then Napoleon became First Consul, the Emperor, then an exile, and died miserably. Every government of Europe felt the weight of the hand of 'the man of destiny.' He made and unmade kings. His iron heel rang on the tesselated pavements of every palace, and his eagle eye scanned the beauties of every abode of art. Then, like his own star, he sank in darkness, leaving on the political horizon the auroral gleam of his vanished brilliancy. In that wonderful character there was a phase, scarcely noted at the time, which is now clearly seen. The great Napoleon was avaricious!"

"What," said I, "Bonaparte cared for money?"

"Let me read you a little history," said the Senator. "In his first campaign in Italy Bonaparte had a compartment in his carriage filled with gold coin. Villages paid their ransom from fire and pillage in good coin of the realm. Once, when his carriage was overturned, the guards assisted in re-loading the heavy sacks of gold. In Spain the strong-box, hooped with iron and crested with the Imperial N, was a by-word among the troops. He was the original European dealer in *bric-a-brac,* and he sold the costliest statues and most famous paintings of Florence and Rome. The denuded walls of Berlin and Vienna told the same tale, and the depleted treasuries of Austria and Germany attested the financial skill of the little Corporal. Napoleon, in the year 1812, was the richest man in Europe."

"What was his purpose?" I asked eagerly.

"God only knows! but it is the fact I wish to impress. When he returned from Elba and placed 12,000 men in the field in three months, you may surmise that he drew on his own treasuries. Not so. The fiscal accounts of the Empire show the means secured by the issue of redeemable paper. Let me call your attention to the fact that in all those ruinous wars France footed the tremendous bills, and Napoleon's strong-box was never opened.

"De Bressac, writing of the finances of Europe in 1820, says:

"'Gold and silver do not feel the general tendency of improved financial conditions, and refuse to return to the channels of trade or come out from their retirement. Contrary to precedent, the general peace of Europe and agricultural prosperity do not increase the volume of the currency.'

"Stringency of the money markets was not only felt in Europe. America, generally so apt to respond to favorable conditions, was seemingly devoid of cash.

"Hardiman, an English economic writer of small note, but much research, remarks of this trying period:

"'It would seem as if something like one hundred million pounds of gold, or five hundred million dollars, had as absolutely disappeared from the markets of the world as though the ground had opened and swallowed it up. Apparently that amount has ceased to exist.'

"*He had stumbled upon a great truth!*

"I see the question in your eyes. What had Napoleon done with it. Had he placed it in the hands of the Rothschilds or some European banker of repute, collateral security would have been found after his death. Nothing of the kind had ever been found. You recall the fact that he made a will, but its provisions called for but a pitiful sum in comparison to the great deficit in the world's medium of traffic.

"The Vatican was troubled about the matter, and sent as commissioners to St. Helena, Fathers Vignala and Strossi, of Italy. Bonaparte was a good Catholic, and on the 3rd of May, 1821, Vignala received his confession and administered extreme unction, but the tremendous secret of his hidden store was not revealed. Two days later he died.

"Sir Hudson Lowe, at the instance of the English Government, sought to find among his papers some clue to the vanished treasure. In a private letter he says:

"'To the best of my knowledge there is no evidence obtainable by fair means—and I will use no other—that Bonaparte made known to any one the secret of his immeasurable wealth. It died with him.'

"Among his suite who remained with him to the last were: Antommarchi, his counselling surgeon; Las Casas, Savary, Larrey, his private physician, and the servants of a lower grade, who are not mentioned in history. These were all handsomely provided for, and all disclaimed a knowledge of any large sums in hidden wealth.

"Thus," said the Senator reflectively, "if the financial writers were correct, the world's work had to be carried on with a shortage of about five hundred million dollars during fifty years?"

"What" said I, "was it ever found?"

"It returned into circulation in the United States in 1876, and helped us celebrate the 100th year of our national existence," said the Senator with a smile.

I sprang from my seat in excitement, and angrily threw down my burned-out cigar.

"Senator, you said I would think you off your base, and, egad, I believe it now."

"Calm yourself. Light another cigar. You used to pore over the story of Aladdin and his wonderful lamp. It *was* a good story, and had some very strange features in it. But there is always in the weirdest stories the elements of probability, or we would not read them. Brand a story as not supposable, or even probable, and it loses its charm. Give it even a faint semblance of a truth which is desirable and pleasant, and we read it with avidity. That truth is stranger than fiction is a solecism. Truth well attested should not be strange. Behold, I tell you of a greater than Aladdin, and a cave vaster than those of the genii, and they should not be strange if they are solidly placed in historical niches and braced with unimpeachable data. Now I will call my Aladdin"—

"*Napoleon Smith, Senator!*"

Thus the servant at the door. Then the introduction followed, and I became acquainted with his friend.

CHAPTER II.

GLOSTER: Come hither, Bess, and let me kiss my boy.

SNUGLY seated in an alcove at the Union League Club, the Senator and myself resumed our interesting dialogue. A week had elapsed, and every day I determined to hear the rest of the remarkable story; but business interfered and drove it from my mind. The longer I thought upon the subject the more probable did his statements appear. Certainly his story would throw light on two important events long shrouded in mystery. No one had ever in history attempted the solution of the Bonaparte problem, and to my knowledge no one had ever claimed to know the secret of the remarkable influx of money into the United States in 1876. The history of current events is easily written. Any chronicler of small beer can tally events as they occur, but it needs genius of a peculiar character to unravel the hidden threads that move the puppets on the stage of action and show the hidden motives that ripen into great deeds. Such a genius was the Senator. His lazy life seemed to run quiet as a brook, but like the brook it tended forever toward its destined sea of infinite extent, and singing or sleeping in quiet pools, the force was ever at work. I shall let him tell the story in his own words, only stopping to say that it lasted during the consumption of ten cigars, and at midnight I shook his hand and was driven to my hotel to pass a sleepless night in wonderment. He said:

I was an attaché of the American Legation in Paris, in 1870, under the lamented and honored Washburne. The Secretary of the American Minister at Paris has no sinecure. Whatever it may be at other capitals, there it

is a life of hard and earnest work. Our relations with France have always been so close that the communication between the governments has been kept open by unlimited correspondence on many subjects. Under the Monarchy, under the Empire, under the Republic, France has always seemed to class the United States as an ally of whom she had no doubts. Diplomacy aimed at securing endorsement has never been deemed necessary. America is always and ever the sister of France. Diplomatic business never rises above mutual admiration and sympathy. Below that strata lies the region of the protection of the dried codfish trade or the admission or exclusion of American pork. I like France. But Paris is the shoaling place of travellers. If an American has visited Paris he has seen Europe. If he has gone all over Europe and not seen Paris, he has not seen Europe. You can imagine an American Minister's office in 1870.

The third Napoleon was in his zenith. It was high noon in France. The morning mists of revolution were as far away in the past as Scipio's wars at Carthage. Higher and higher soared the Napoleonic star until it shone in the heavens alone. Not a great work of art met the eye of the gazer but he muttered, "Napoleon." The Louvre and the Tuileries, twin works of faultless art, had been joined to form a matchless picture. Where squalor once revelled in narrow streets, and its hot steams once arose to stifle kings, behold the long, wide street with no lurking-place for crime. Beauty on every hand until it fatigued the eye. Broad parks that in their very vastness bespoke a noble originator. The Boulevards, a monument to Napoleon which hate cannot destroy. And fashion—well, Eugénie reigned as queen and dictated the robes and hats of four hundred million women.

You should have seen the lighted streets at night. You should have felt all Paris throb at midnight with universal music, and a million dancers shake the earth. In 1870 Paris was great—greater than she ever can be under a Republic—greater than she ever should be under

God, for it was the mad frenzy of the bacchante, not the healthful greatness of true strength.

The ordinary labor of the Secretary is pleasant. We met all American travellers of any consequence, and the mere office-work of securing passports leads to many pleasant acquaintances.

But every pleasant duty has its drawbacks, and the Secretary of the American Minister has at least trials enough to keep him from vainglory. Here at home we have the ticket-seller at a large railway station. Prematurely gray, and locked into a small room where he cannot get arms with which to destroy himself or others, he more or less calmly answers questions which would seem strange to a nurse in an insane asylum.

When a train is about to depart and the station rapidly fills, you will see this ticket-seller look out from his den to see what idiot asylum is being moved now, and a look of pain which is positively piteous comes over his face as he sees three men approaching at once with their mouths already open, and a question sticking out on every sun-dried tooth, and every right hand containing an umbrella extended, ready to lay the precious gingham parachute on the little shelf while he tortures the caged dispenser of tickets.

The Secretary of the American Minister does not rapidly become gray or lose his reason, but I attribute this immunity only to the relaxation incident to Parisian life, not to lack of mental tortures or exasperating questions.

Here is a New England inventor of a combined potato-masher and rolling-pin. He wants to know about French patent laws, and incidentally how the French mash their potatoes now, and what kind of rolling-pins they use. He is easily disposed of, for he is a business man.

Here is a large lady who was floated into society on petroleum, and is appropriately oleaginous still. In a smooth, gurgling tone, like the melodious flow of her own Pennsylvania pipe line, she wants to know what articles

are exempt from duty and what goods she can carry into New York as her own necessary costume.

Here is the American Thomas Jingle, Esq., with a dilapidated dress suit and a glass diamond, who has gone broke in Paris, and wants to know if there is not a fund or something supported by a paternal government to assist gentlemen in difficulties to return to a land which mourns their absence. Improbable as it may appear, such fellows usually, by hook or by crook, are assisted in returning home.

Then we have the sailor who has knocked somebody out while drunk, or been knocked out himself, and is brought in by two voluble gendarmes, to claim the protection of the Stars and Stripes; or we have the really needy American tar who is laid up in hospital with some outlandish fever, and turns with longing home-sickness to any American face or voice.

It was in the rôle of representative of a fraternal government that I met the man of my story. He came into the hotel of the American Legation and loomed upon the view in a light-blue military overcoat and a military cap. The rest of his costume was a presentable civilian suit of clothing. The military cap he removed, and saluted me with his right hand in army style. While I finished a paper on the desk before me he stood erect and hummed a tune strangely familiar to me. Without looking up I said:

"What is the tune, Sergeant?"

"Ha, ha, you caught on, hey! That's 'When Johnny Comes Marchin' Home, skewball.'"

"In the late war, Sergeant?"

"You bet! 44th Maine, 1st Brigade, 3d Division, 11th Corps."

"Name, please?"

"Napoleon Smith."

"Napoleon Smith," I repeated slowly and laid away my pen—and a smile involuntarily wreathed my lips as

I thought of the incongruous marriage of two such names. "You possess a strange name, Sergeant."

"I don't know why it's strange. Possibly I have as much right to it as the big Dutchman I saw inspecting the troops this morning on the Champ de Mars."

"Possibly you have more right to it," I said, as I looked over my desk at him. His cap removed, I observed that his round head leaned to one side, as I had observed the first Napoleon's. He had the same slightly Roman nose, the thin, short, upper lip, and expressive eye—and to complete the parody, I noted the protruding chest, and on the left breast a medal in bronze. "By George!" said I, "Sergeant, your name was a lucky guess or a mighty good prophecy. Who gave you that name?"

A blush of anger overspread his face for a moment, and that was succeeded by a look of pride as he answered:

"My father gave it to me, and his name was also Napoleon Smith."

I became interested and asked him to take a chair, and said:

"Now then, my man, what is that medal on your left breast?"

"That is a new wrinkle in the States. That is a badge of the G. A. R.—Grand Army of the Republic."

"Ah yes, I have heard of it. Now, what can I do for you?" and I looked expectant of the usual demand on my time, money, or patience.

"You can't do anything for me. I only came here to report. I am an American citizen. I am here on peculiar business. I want some backing and moral support, that is all."

"No claim to the throne of the Empire, I hope, Smith? By George! you might win by your face and name," and I laughed heartily.

Again the blush overspread his face, and he said in a husky tone:

"Captain, you might make a worse guess several times before you made a better one. Have you time to spare me a few minutes?"

I nodded assent.

"Can you read French?"

I nodded again.

"Well, look that paper over and tell me what it is," and he laid a yellow sheet of paper with a printed heading and Imperial N on it, before me.

"It appears to be a household roster of the suite of the first Napoleon while he was at St. Helena."

"Right you are! Now, do you see the name of Smith there?"

"Yes, twice: Anna Moline Smith and her son Napoleon Smith, aged twelve years."

"Is that a genuine paper, Cap?" said Smith, leaning forward with an anxious look.

"I should say yes, and valuable as an antiquarian curiosity or as containing an autograph of the great Napoleon."

He took it reverently, folded it up, and took from his breast-pocket another yellow paper, saying, "What is this paper about, Cap?"

"This appears to be an abstract copy of Napoleon's will at St. Helena," said I.

"Is the name of Smith there anywhere?" and Smith breathed excitedly.

"Yes, Anna Moline Smith and her son are mentioned again," said I.

"Now then, Cap, read this one which is addressed to the boy Napoleon Smith," and he smiled exultantly.

"This, my friend, seems to be an admission of a peculiar interest in the boy, and hints at further revelations to be made at some future time. He also here speaks of making the acquaintance of Anna Moline Smith while at Boulogne in 1803, and her afterward following his fortunes. This is a strange paper, Sergeant."

"Ah yes, Mr. Secretary, this is what you men call unwritten history. I am the son of that Napoleon Smith of St. Helena. I am the grandson of Anna Moline Smith, and while Dutch blood wears the Imperial N, I am an American sergeant in the United States Army. Sinclairville, Maine, is my home. There was a great deal of unwritten history in St. Helena in 1821 and 1822, but I am going to write some of it, and all I ask is that you just believe me. Just wait, and when I want a word of advice, give it like an American and a brother. Perhaps you will hear of me again, perhaps not."

So many strange ideas thronged into my mind that he had arisen, made his army salute and passed out before I was ready to speak. I heard his martial step in the hall, and the whistling of the ridiculous tune, "Johnny Comes Marching Home Again, skewball," and I dreamed a moment of Broadway and the returning regiments.

CHAPTER III.

BUCKINGHAM : The devil speed him ! no man's pie is freed
From his ambitious finger.

As the rope-walker feels that he is losing his balance when in the most dangerous position of his aerial feat he does not allow himself to fall, nor does he ignominiously sit down and cling to the rope, but as he feels himself losing his head he precipitately turns a flip-flap, and amid the plaudits of the astonished crowd turns a moment of weakness into a triumph,

The Franco-Prussian war was, on the part of Napoleon III., a military flip-flap to allay the giddiness of the French, and allow him time to resume his balance in his aerial feat of astonishing Europe.

He fell and broke his neck.

The world stood entranced in 1870, and gave reasons pro and con. anent the war. "*Au Rhin!*" shouted France. "*Am Rhein!*" shouted Germany. England sapiently remarked that the greed of France aimed at capturing the Rhenish Provinces. The rest of Europe more sapiently said, that Bismarck aimed his armies at Alsace and Lorraine. To be sure, in 1866, Benedetti had gone down in diplomatic skirmish before the keen lance of Bismarck, and his master had ever since felt the sad defeat of his Minister.

All these were said to be reasons for war, and Gladstone raised his hands in horror at a causeless conflict, and the Beaconsfield had wondered at the cruelty of involving millions in bloodshed, forgetting their own blood-stained India. But no one had alluded to the real cause of the rupture between France and Germany. The Rhine, as it sang on its way to the sea a song of eternal peace, disclaimed any knowledge of a cause for

armed men singing as they gazed on her blue tide, "*Die Wacht am Rhein.*" Alsace and Lorraine ripened their grapes or barley beneath a peaceful sun, or went in and out of factories and huts, and sang and worked and said, "the cause is not in us."

Up in the very zenith of his power and glory, Napoleon, as his head swam for a moment said:

"All the world is looking; now for my greatest flip-flap before I lose my balance."

He reasoned that the Bonapartes came into power through military glory. The French worship military heroes. The Prince Imperial, a pretty boy with his mother's fair hair and sparkling eyes, must see a battle-field, and at Gravelotte must catch a ricochetting and spent cannon-ball, and the Emperor must say of him, "Ha! my boy is a Bonaparte." Ye gods! this is the clap-trap we put on the stage when we make history, and yet we sometimes argue that melodrama is too stagey and impossible.

Was France ready for war? Well, since 1866 she had been a large camp of instruction.

Down the boulevards had thundered into Paris and out again long trains of artillery and flashing troops of cavalry. At the *Arc de l'Etoile* twenty-five thousand troops had been reviewed at a time. On the Champ de Mars brilliant evolutions had shown the discipline and *elan* of French Infantry of the line. Who could have told, amid all that flash and glitter, that the bayonets were pot-metal furnished by contract, and the muskets cheap toys, and the powder blackened sawdust. Who could have told that the munitions for the artillery would not explode, and the new cannon would burst sooner than the shells they hurled at the enemy. Ah! the preparations France had made for war were like the material of a stage war, made only for show, and 1870 was to teach a sad lesson to France.

In the meantime Bismarck had been laying the foundation for a superstructure of glory as solid as his own

stalwart frame. Silent and stern as fate, the stolid columns of Von Moltke approached the line of disputed territory, and every grain of powder, every bayonet, every piece of artillery was as perfect as modern science could make them.

"Au Rhin ! Au Rhin ! "

I stepped to the window and looked out. It was a dashing cavalryman with jacket looped with gold braid, with trousers too large for the attenuated legs, and dangling behind the legs a sabre which the little chap could only wield with two hands. It was he who sang.

Further down the street a company of infantry is turning by platoons into the main avenue. Ah ! What drums these Frenchman have. The windows rattle and the heart throbs in sympathy, and the blood comes up into the cheek while the eyes brightens as the platoons came in line with the eye, and fifty legs move in a long line in cadence with the drum. What ! are the fifes playing the *Marsellaise?* Napoleon, there is danger in that tune! and these volatile Frenchmen can be sung or played into demons.

Now the platoons wheel to the left and move off by the right flank, while the fifes cease their music, and the drums are tossed over the left shoulder. I see now why they clear the streets—a battery of field artillery is coming down the avenue on the jump. The postilions are leaning forward lashing their horses, and the cannoneers are clinging to the hand-rails of the caissons as the heavy wheels bound over the rough pavement. A youthful artillery officer rides alongside each piece, with the chin-piece of his shako in his teeth, and his sword glinting in the sun. *"En avant ! "*

Ah ! if show and music and hurry would only win battles.

Napoleon had said in his heavy, oracular way : " It will be a long and conclusive war. Whichever nation is defeated will be forever incapable of future attempts at conquest."

Poor fellow ! A dynasty was to die, not a nation.

" Is Monsieur pleased with the grand preparation for war ? "

I turn from the window to meet the sneering face of Marquis Larue. He is of the Quartier St. Germain. His grey mustache, his padded shoulders, and his eternal sneer are hateful to me. I know him for an old Orleanist who hates the Reds, who hates the Bonapartes, and who lives only on the hope that the *canaille*, Imperial as well as of the Faubourg St. Antoine, will go down in any struggle which may occur.

" Yes, Marquis—I love the bustle and the glory of an approaching contest."

" Oui, Monsieur, and when many die a few rascals will perish. The devil speed them, for France needs bleeding sadly."

I dislike this old wretch, and yet he is honored, and I often meet him in the best society. Bonaparte has held the old aristocracy in expectancy, and has doled out enough of the confiscated estates to keep them silent if not loyal. What have I heard of this old man which makes me hate him so ? No matter—it is nothing to me.

" We have a proverb, Marquis, ' when rogues fall out, honest men get their dues,' but it is just as true that when honest men fall out rogues often get more than their due," and I turn to my desk.

" Monsieur is a Yankee. He leans to the Reds, and would rejoice to see again the guillotine at work on the aristocrats," and the grizzled mustache trembles in another sneer.

" Possibly you are right," and I bow him out and greet in the doorway Napoleon Smith.

" Say, Cap, I am going in for this thing."

" What thing ? "

" This war. I am stuck here in Paris, and these French fellers tell me that I can get a non-commissioned officer's position on my record in the U. S. army. This G. A. R. badge takes like hot cakes."

"I can send you out of the city, if you wish to go, even after hostilities commence," and I pushed a chair toward him.

"I don't wish to go. I came here on an errand of importance, and I can go on with it as well if I am in the National Guard, and perhaps better, for these French police are devils to follow a feller up and know his business. Besides, this ain't goin' to be much of a skirmish," and he drummed on the desk and hummed his favorite tune.

"My friend," I said, "this is going to be a terrible war. Think twice before you embroil yourself in it."

"Cap, excuse me, but you make me laugh," said he. "There ain't room in Europe for a Gettysburg. It would lap over into Asia or get crowded into the water. Great Scott! I wish McMahon could have seen Pickett's charge. When ten thousand men walk at common time across a field a mile wide with sixty pieces of artillery playin' on 'em, and walk up to sixty thousand men shootin' pint-blank with Springfield rifles, and then leave five thousand of those men in front of the works and walk to reform under fire, that is fightin'."

"Yes," said I, with just American pride.

"And when you see, Cap, as I did, at Mission Ridge, forty thousand men in one line move up a steep hill on a fortified enemy, and in just sixty-five minutes capture forty-seven pieces of artillery and thirteen thousand stand of small arms, that is gittin' there with both feet, ain't it!" and he leaned forward and smiled fiercely.

"Hurrah for Grant!" I shouted, forgetting where I was.

"*And* a tiger!" said Napoleon Smith.

"Why, Lord! Cap, there ain't no chance of such fighting here. They will just tear around for a while and burn powder and make children deaf and scare cattle; but now there was Brandy Station, 2nd U. S Dragoons and some bully Volunteer cavalry regiments went in with sabres. Ground shook, heads split open, bugles

blowin', when—I just wish these mounseers could *see* a fight once, yum yum!"

"Ha, ha, Smith, but what did you want of me?" and I resumed a magisterial air.

"Have you ever read much about how *the* Bonaparte died?" he asked.

"Yes, considerable. He made a will remembering and rewarding his friends and suite. He received the consolations of the church from two Italian priests. He wished a *post mortem* to be held on his remains to determine the cause of his death. Much surmise was indulged in as to the disposition of his vast fortune accumulated by conquest. He never revealed that," I said.

"Yes, he did," and Smith leaned forward.

"What?" said I.

"Let me give you right here some unwritten history. He called to his bedside a boy—a boy he was fond of and who was always with him. And he handed to that boy a red morocco case and told him to go to England with Captain Maitland, and from there to the United States, and sometime to carefully study the papers in the red morocco case, and he could become the richest man in the world. That boy was my father, and he was a weak, cowardly man, and died in Sinclairville, Maine, a poor man, but a good father to me. God rest his soul! I have been for five years a soldier in the Union army. I have been a traveller in many lands. I have stood on the ground where the great Bonaparte fought his first boyish battles at Brienne. I have lain under the grape vines of Corsica where he was born. I have stood on fields where his name was made immortal, and of what do you think I have dreamed—I, the Yankee soldier, the uneducated waif, the poor toiler in the poor soil of a New England village? I have dreamed, Cap, that though fate may have tinged the circumstance with shame, and the truth must bear its sting, I have dreamed, Cap, *that in my veins flows the only genuine Bonaparte blood in*

the world;" and a tear stood in the beautiful brown eyes.

"Are you insane, Smith?" I shouted.

"No, do I ask any recognition? Do I come here for your endorsement? Not at all, but I want one soul on God's green earth to sympathise with me," and he turned away to conceal his emotion.

"But if you had evidence of this," I hinted.

"For what purpose? To create another worse than a Tichborne case. To become the laughing stock of Penny-a-liners. Not any for me," and he smiled again.

"But for my private satisfaction," I hinted again.

He put his hand into an inside pocket and drew out a worn red morocco case adorned on the side with a jewelled N. From this he drew a folded paper and threw it on the desk, saying,

"Tell me what that paper is about."

I glanced at it a moment and said, "It seems to be a memorandum of several large sums of money. As it is computed in francs it would be nearly or quite two billion franks," and I turned it over curiously.

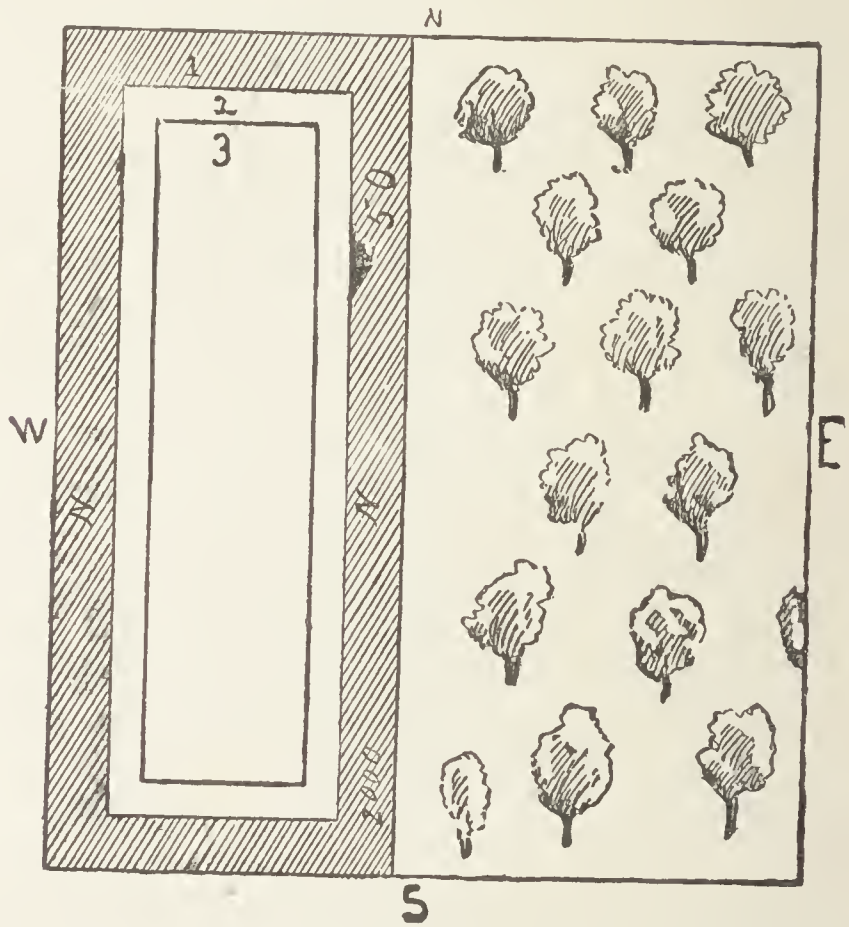
"Now look this over," and he handed me another paper.

"This paper," said I, "appears to record sums secured at different dates and different localities. Cities in Italy are mentioned as well as Spain and Germany. This was undoubtedly a private paper which Napoleon kept for his own use," and I handed it reverently back.

"Now here," said Smith, "is an object which England, in 1822, would have given a baronetcy for, or Italy would have given a castle and all the orders and stars a gibbering count ever wore on his breast. I think the Pope sent two commissioners to St. Helena for this little parchment, and even they failed. It is a simple little diagram, isn't it?" and spreading out on my desk a small piece of parchment he laughed sardonically.

Evidently I was looking upon what the first Consul intended should be a revelation to the one who should

become possessed of it, but to me and at a casual glance it revealed nothing. I will draw here a rough diagram of what the parchment contained.



"Evidently," said I, "this represents a large building fronting on a park. The oblong square represents the several stories. The figures would seem to represent length, and location of certain deposits may be taught by the large N, which, by the way, is colored on the parchment to represent gold or copper. A copper N would seem to be the idea. On the whole, Smith, I would give up the military idea and hunt for a large building answering to these dimensions and located as this, and become a rich man. My friend, I begin to believe in your Utopian dreams, and if I associate with you long will come to the conclusion that the Arabian Nights is a chronicle of true Asiatic history. By George! this be-

gins to look tangible, and, as we say in New York, I begin to take stock in it."

"No," said Smith, "I will enlist. *Vive la France!* I will see more of the country if I become a soldier. I will be more trusted and have more freedom in my search, and to tell you the truth my five years' service have spoiled me for a quiet life; I will see just enough of service to make my blood circulate. And now, whatever happens to me, I will leave orders for my comrades to communicate with you, and if I die you will fall heir to my papers and my secret. God bless you Cap! forgive me for my rough army style in calling you Cap, and now farewell."

He grasped my hand a moment, a tear stood in his eye, but he brushed it away with his sleeve and ran down the hall to the street, and I heard him whistle again that absurd, "Johnny Comes Marching Home," as he went down the street.

CHAPTER IV.

QUEEN KATHARINE: My lord, my lord,
I am a simple woman, much too weak
To oppose your cunning.

I RATHER liked the quiet aristocratic air of the Quartier St. Germain, and as I formed acquaintances among the denizens easily, I found relaxation and positive rest from my arduous duties at the legation by wandering off to some heavy-portalled dark hotel, and there mixing with the educated and artistic relics of the old *régime*. If there is a charm to an old ivy-covered ruin where we may wander amid silence and decay and yet see in the magnificent fragments evidences of a past beauty, or tracing amid the overgrown turf the worn flagstones worn smooth by thousands of feet now turned to dust, why may we not see more of beauty in the ruins of a past glorious state of society, ruins of a gentility of manners, and a sort of ivy-covered and dusty courtesy to be seen in the remains of a higher ruling class now gone to decay? We may be as democratic as we will in America, and as practical in weighing everything in the scales of utility, but when we step into the wide velvet-carpeted rooms, and meet one of those white-haired calm old ladies or gentlemen who are the blossom in perfection of thirty or forty generations of well-fed, well-educated ease and restfulnes, there will be an involuntary homage to a perfected manhood or womanhood which never comes from the activities of trade or the muscular development of toil. Yes, I know what you will say. You will say that the manhood evolved from freedom and equality in the race of life gives us more of the real and true manhood; but while I admit it, I at the same time shrug my shoulders and remark inwardly that the new type is more of the

flesh fleshy, and cast in a rougher mold, and I wonder if the original Adam was not too much like the animals he named, and whether I would not like better the smaller, but more courteous, gentlemen of the old school of 1792. Did not Shakespeare touch a very deep truth when he said,

"There's such divinity doth hedge a king,"

and is not that hedge an involuntary respect which ignorance and coarseness pays to calmness and refinement?

I have been told that our Union soldiers, when marching through the conquered South, sacking and plundering plantations, were often made to desist from their depredations by an involuntary homage which brute strength paid to superior cultivation and calm assertion of a higher civilization coming from ages of rule of an inferior race. Vituperation the rude soldier would meet with, curses or abuse he could answer with strength, but the calm assertion of power by a lady often protected the household gods from plunder and the house itself from destruction. Logically, equality is right and is the means of elevating the race; but sentimentally I early fell a victim to the charms of a higher ruling class.

In the Quartier St. Germain I often visited a lieutenant of the Guards, Hippolyte Boh. Hippolyte was not of the old *régime*, though living amidst its fading splendors. On the contrary, he was absurdly and most realistically of the volatile, bombastic French class which creates at will a Monarchy, an Empire, or a Republic. He could sing the *Marsellaise* or shout himself hoarse for an Emperor, or toss his cap and climb up on a table and shout for a King, but love of France was a predominant color in all the kaleidoscopic hues which flashed through his brain. As the servant ushered me into the wide, cool parlour, the Lieutenant had tossed up against the ceiling a paper-covered volume, and was standing on one leg, singing "*Le Sabre de mon Père.*" I stood a

moment laughing, and then he rushed up to me and embraced me.

"Ah, my friend!" said he, "have you read the marvellous book, '*L'Art de Battre les Prussiens*,' by M. Louis Noir? See the wonderful book!"

"How to batter the Prussians?" said I. "Well, Lieutenant, that is what you want to know now, and if M. Noir can show France how to do that, he will be the great benefactor of his country, for, believe me, Lieutenant, as we Yankees say, you have a big job on hand."

"It is nothing," said Hippolyte, brushing up his front hair with his right hand and extending his left in an oratorical manner; "it is a mere bagetelle. McMahon will charge over the ranks of the sleepy Germans in a cataract. Bazaine and Trochu will astonish the dull pig Von Moltke. France will have another Austerlitz, Marengo, Aboukir."

"And," said I, "no fear of a Waterloo, eh?"

"Ah, never!" said he, "no more Waterloos—see our armies. Behold the armaments! France was never so strong."

"Well, Lieutenant," said I, "I trust you are a good prophet, but there is something about the quiet stolid determination of Bismarck and his generals which I do not like. There are too many discordant elements in France to-day to presage victory. As the Marquis Larue said yesterday"—

"Yes," said Hippolyte, suddenly quieting down and approaching me; "what did the Marquis say yesterday?"

"He said France needed bleeding sadly," and I smiled.

"He, the Marquis, said it, did he?" and he shook his fist and grinned in anger until his white teeth gleamed. "Do you know what this Marquis is, my friend?"

"One of the old aristocracy, is he not?" I asked.

"The Marquis is a villain, a deep-dyed black-hearted villain!" said the Lieutenant wrathfully. "He is one of those who fled to England when the Reds set up the guillotine in the *Place de Grève*, and when he came back

under the Presidency he kept silent, like a watchful cat, but when the Empire was set up he came out into the sunshine of favor, and by flattery won back his title, and then by lies and fraud turned out his niece from her birthright and made her a wanderer and beggar. Let me whisper, my American friend—what is the Marquis doing now? It is hinted that he is in communication with Bismarck, and when the German is victorious, which he never will be, the Marquis will again be in the sunshine of favor. Do I know the Marquis? I would to Heaven I never had known him!"

The volatile soldier was weeping.

He touched a bell, and when the servant entered the room he said in a tender voice:

"Tell Mademoiselle Aimée I would see her.

He sat with his eyes expectantly fixed on the door, while a look of pride and tender love made them luminous. I heard no step, but saw the heavy door turn on its hinges, and there entered the room the loveliest woman or child, or whatever she might be called, I ever saw.

She was not small; better use the French word *petite.* Small enough to be beautiful, with a pure, childish, gentle beauty, which instantly appealed to the heart for sympathy, for manly protection. Large enough to be exquisitely formed, from the tip of the little twinkling feet to the low white brow which rose about two large luminous hazel eyes, which were shaded by long lashes, which as she looked down in modesty rested in a dark fringe on her cheek. There is a beauty to the conservatory flower which is not found in a blossom which opens under the dew and sun and has been pelted by raindrops. The wild flower is rich in coloring, but the flower of the conservatory has on its petals a velvety finish which a rough breeze or a heavy raindrop might disarrange. This little beauty who stood before me might be the flower of the conservatory. I imagined a dewy beauty to the lips, and a soft roundness to the cheek, or perhaps a velvety whiteness to the neck and exposed arms, which too ardent

kisses of the sun or breeze might have displaced. Was she a child? Her robes were womanly and décolleté to that extent that the swell of a womanly figure beneath the white column of the neck argued maturity, and yet the waist was girded by a wide sash of ribbon which trailed on the floor, while the nut-brown ringlets of her hair hung unconfined down her back. Beautiful, childish, ravishingly simple and sweet, as a French woman may sometimes be between the ages of twelve and twenty—never later.

The Lieutenant did not look to see the effect of this sweet vision on me. He knew what it would be. He was a worshipper, and had never found a person who did not willingly share his homage when they saw his idol.

"This is my daughter Aimée. Aimée, this is my friend Monsieur——"

"I would know my father's American friend. I have often heard him speak of you," and the little rose-tinted palm was laid in my hand.

Imagine my astonishment. This jumping-jack of a lieutenant, who had just been giving me exquisite merriment by his antics and singing and boasting—this little wasp-waisted dandy of the infantry, with his waxed mustache and white gloves, reminding me of an American militia-man on dress parade—this man the father of this floating, ethereal little sylph in sky-blue satin! It was too much, and I sank back exhausted.

"Was Monsieur in the great American War of the Rebellion?" said Aimée.

"I was in the public service," I answered. "I was not a soldier."

"I am sorry for you, then," said this warlike angel. "You have seen, though, the great Grant, and the brave Sherman, and the great man with the black horse which comes so far to the great battle?"

"Sheridan," I suggested.

"Yes, yes—the Little Phil," and her big eyes twinkled with admiration. "Ah! it was great—superb!"

"And now you have war in France," I said. "And you will have glorious names to remember, glorious fields to consecrate, and new history to be written. I hope, Mademoiselle, it may not be as long a war as ours, nor cost so many lives, but may be just as successful. Americans remember that France gave us our first recognition in our early struggles, and sent us one of our bravest generals in Lafayette, and, better than all, there was a French army stood in line at Yorktown when Cornwallis laid down his arms. We can cry with good will, '*Vive la France*!'"

Tears stood in the beautiful eyes, and her voice trembled as she answered:

"France, I am afraid will need much sympathy and long forbearance for her many mistakes. I love her still, though she has been a cruel mother to me."

"Behold," said the Lieutenant, stalking forward and pointing to Aimée in a dramatic manner, "who is this Aimée, my daughter—the daughter of Lieutenant Hippolyte Boh of the infantry? Yes, she is my daughter, but she is more! This Aimée is also the grandchild of the Duke de Brinvilliers. Where the sun kisses the grapes on a thousand acres is her rightful home. Not in the Quartier St. Germain, in the shadows, should she be, but in the wide salons of the tall chateau. Her divine mother, the gentle Marie, was a poor toiler in the streets of Paris. Then she smiled on the poor lieutenant of the line, Hippolyte Boh, and he—he drank water, and saved every sou, that his gentle wife might rest in ease and comfort; and her child, Aimée, has lain in the soft nest while the parent bird has fought for food. Is it so, Aimée?"

"My father!" was all she said, and laid her cheek against his face.

"And who crept into the courts of kings or presidents or emperors and poisoned their ears with false tales, and took away the castles and the vineyards, and blotted out the name of Brinvilliers? *The Marquis Larue*!" he

shouted. "Who to-day seeks our quiet home and puts watchers on our track, and would take the life of my angel, the last heir to the vast estates? *The Marquis Larue*!" he shrieked.

"My father," said Aimée, "perhaps Monsieur does not care to hear of these matters, which do not concern him."

"He does care. He is my American friend," said the excited Lieutenant. "Who else shall know? Every man you meet may be of the secret police. Who shall tell what will come next? Will a Bourbon go back to Versailles, or a Bonaparte make his court at the Tuileries, or will another President sit above Delegates in the Louvre? What matter! Whatever it be, and wherever France may fall, the dark-minded Marquis will still be a courtier, a spy, or a delegate, and will still seek the blood of my angel, that the great estates may remain under his heel. Ah, Aimée, you are descended from soldiers, and your poor father is a soldier. See! I must soon go against the German. If I come back, it will be with the Cross of the Legion of Honor on my breast. If I come not back, then you will be alone in the nest and the falcon soaring above."

"My father!" Aimée said, and patted the rough cheek.

"The American is my friend. He is a lover of liberty and of justice. If I come not back, Aimée, go to my friend for guidance and for help," and he took Aimée's hand and laid it in mine.

What a situation was this for an old bachelor Secretary of Legation! I had not been a woman-hater, but I had been too busy in my ambitious plans, which had borne fruit in my foreign appointment, to ever seek for woman's love, and I had never been smitten by the arrows of love. Was I smitten now? No, for I would as soon have fallen in love with the auroral tinge of morning or a distant star as with this ethereal little sylph. A fatherly instinct in me made me for a moment womanish, and it was in a thick, tremulous tone I said:

"Lieutenant, you are a man! That is the highest Yankee compliment, and if I have laughed at your bombast, and ridiculed at times your lively expectations of conquest and glory, you will forgive me. I honor you, I respect you, and I hope God will bring you safe out of this war. If not, then you can die in peace, knowing that as long as life shall last and reason sit on her throne, I will try to be all you have been to Aimée. I would die for her now if danger threatened. I can say no more."

It was very French, I know, but somehow it seemed all right, on that occasion, when the little Lieutenant put his arms around my neck and kissed me. I don't suppose we shall ever fully understand these French, anyway. They do everything under high pressure, and if occasionally they blow out a cylinder-head in politics or manners or religion, it must be expected.

Aimée did not kiss me.

"Do not wait to hear from us. Come often and call on Aimée. I shall probably be ordered soon to join my regiment. Remember, Monsieur, you are our friend, and whatever happens, bring my angel-daughter under the Stars and Stripes, and care for her as I would did God let me live." Aimée sat in tears. The Lieutenant stood in the middle of the room with one hand on his heart and the other extended in benediction over his child. Thus I left them.

CHAPTER V.

MESSENGER: He hath done good service, lady, in these wars.
BEATRICE: You had musty victual, and he hath holp to eat it.

PARIS in sackcloth and ashes. Paris hungry and thirsty, and gazing out of darkened windows on desolate streets, where the few shivering citizens who stir abroad are seeking bits of wood, or scattered boughs from lately cut shade-trees along the beautiful streets. It is winter in Paris, and yet at night casements do not rattle with music, nor the pavements jar with rapidly fleeting carriages. It is a strange winter for the gay city. At night we cannot look down the long avenues and see them flooded with light. No; all the light we see is the fires at the sentry reserves in open parks or at windy street corners, or along the boulevards where an army is encamped. Paris is surrounded with fortifications. Is it a providential meting out to the noisy, belligerent city of the measure she would heap for others, that all the blood and hunger and cold of war should at last settle down at her gates—that the dregs of the cup at which the Emperor drank and Bazaine tasted, should be poured down the throat of Paris? Hollow-eyed wretches might pour out of the faubourgs and shiver and curse, but what can they smite? where shall the weight of their anger fall? On the Germans? Ah! these cold, sleepy Germans. From Saarbruck to Sedan has been the stolid heavy pounding of an overgrown blacksmith. No valor, no *élan*, no dash is of any avail. The German is fate itself.

The Emperor, with one hundred thousand men—with a thousand batteries of his vaunted light artillery—with an eagle and two standards, had surrendered at Sedan. Bazaine had followed the Imperial example at Metz, and nad laid in the broad palm of William of Prussia a com-

plete army, with all its equipments and stores, and still France lived! But she is starving, and it is winter.

Paris is France—then save Paris.

The Crown Prince of Prussia has drawn those cold, calm German lines around the gay city, and waits with phlegmatic patience for Paris to yield. Of course, she will struggle in her death-agony, and then she will feel the shells from two hundred cannon; or if her struggles push her out far enough, she will feel the iron hail of grape and canister, and be driven back, torn and bleeding, to wait a slower death by starvation. This is such a strange aspect in which to view the luxurious capital! The restaurant where idle and fashionable youth used to order the dinner of a dozen courses is still open. How dreary the yellow bill of fare looks which is pinned behind the cashier's desk as a curiosity! The wine card is there too, and it looks also like a flower long dead and only dear by its memories. Perhaps a faint tinge of the odor is still there. Now the restaurant offers to its favored patrons steaks and roasts at fabulous prices; but these savory cuts of choice meat should savor of the war also, for they are cut from the bodies of horses which once carried the saddle in the cavalry or worked in the collars of the artillery. And even this food is difficult of attainment except by the wealthy. What of the pallid wretches of the faubourgs? Why, they tell us that they are fishing with line and hook through the gratings of the sewers, and their hooks are baited with crumbs of bread, and when they are successful and secure a bite, they drag out the great blue rat of the Seine, and shout with glee, for they have won sustenance for a family for one day more.

But the Germans have shut Paris in from sympathy or help. The line is now complete. and it is only a question of endurance, and then Paris will fall and the ruin of France will be complete. The city is very silent. The French soldiers do not sing as they did two months ago. They have a drabbled, discouraged look, as of a handsome

militia company caught out in a thunder-shower. The drums do not throb as they did, nor the fifes scream. Paris is not enthusiastic—she is only enduring.

But in this crucible of national torment the American Minister remains with the Provisional Government, as he did with the Empire, and as he will with the Republic when it is set up, as it no doubt will be. Before the eyes of Paris floats the Stars and Stripes, and even the nearest lines of Germans may look upon "Old Glory" as it lazily drifts about in the wintry wind. We had supposed that every American citizen had passed out before the city was fully invested, and that we should have a long season of rest until Paris became again the centre of fashion and folly. Imagine, then, my surprise as I saw entering the office one day, a full-blooded, athletic, but lank New England Yankee. My heart leaped with pleasure as he took off his tall silk hat, somewhat weather-beaten, and reaching down into its capacious depths, fished out a red printed bill and pointed to the last line with one finger, as he laid it on the desk. I read :

"*Nehemiah Sturgis, General Agent.*"

"I hev to git them bills done into French over here. That ain't a bad bill, though. Gosh! I could git little dodgers like them printed in Boston fur a dollar and seventy-five cents a thousand. Costs me about twice that here in Paree."

"You appear to have something to do with soap," I remarked, with a smile.

"Well, I guess, Senator, non-corrosive, non-explosive; floats in water, as it oughter; one pound of it will make sixty-four cubic feet of lather, and it will remove any kind of grease, stain, iron-rust, mildew, or moths. It will prove stronger, last longer, and will stay sweet and remain hard in any climate. We give a beautiful chromo card with every cake. Save up your wrappers and send twenty-five of them to the home office, and get

a large steel engraving, eighteen by twenty-six, of the capture of Fort Fisher by Leonidas Brown—that is, the picture is by Leonidas Brown; he didn't capture Fort Fisher. Here, put a cake in your pocket."

"Well, but, man alive," said I, "why didn't you get out before the siege? You will starve here or be killed."

"Biggest thing you ever seen, Senator. It will be in history. 'The agent of the Wild Flower Soap remained in Paris during the siege.' Gosh! look here; I gave away a thousand cakes to the soldiers, and whenever one was shot or captured the Germans found the cake of soap in his pocket, with the chromo card and the name of the general agent in Paris, and the firm's name in Boston. Look at them 'ere cards!"

And he spread on my desk a row of gaudy advertising cards, with red-cheeked damsels in every position at the bath or wash-tub, and a conspicuous advertisement at the bottom.

"I want to git," said he, "some photographs of great paintings in the Louvre, and when I go home I will elevate the soap trade and encourage art all at the same time. This will be the biggest kind of a boom in ten years in America. Save up the wrappers and send 'em in to the home office."

"In the meantime, you will starve in Paris," said I, laughing.

"Yes, in the meanest kind of a time; but the company foots the bills, and I have eat horse-meat till I felt as if I was in a light harness all the time, and fittin' up for a spring meetin' on Long Island. Oh, I'll come out all right if the artillery doesn't give out. Say, I used to hear the infantry volunteers tell about fightin' cavalry, and how many saddles they emptied in a fight. I don't know how many saddles it will empty from the under side to feed me until the 'springtime comes again my love,' as the poet says, but I am goin' to see the thing through. Put me on the register, and if I fall, ship the remains; but while there's life there's soap!"

Boom! Ah, that is close by!

We hurried out into the street, and were nearly crushed by a battery of artillery, which was hurrying out to the barriers. In the shame and humiliation of France, amid the ruins of her military glory, in her darkest hour, there arose a flame of such lustre that for a moment it caused her to forget the machinations of royalists, the ambitions of the Republicans, and the Brutishness of the Socialists or Reds. With Bazaine, McMahon, and the Emperor defeated, there remained in Paris—Trochu.

France was to cast off for a moment her sackcloth and ashes, and see for a time such fighting as she saw at Jena, Austerlitz, Magenta, Solferino. When the lioness is in the den with her cubs, beware!

Trochu was shut up in Paris with the fragments of the army, and the setting sun of France's glory would go down in a sea of flame.

When we reached the barriers we looked out on a glorious scene. Forty thousand infantry were in column of battalions. On the flanks the pitiful remnants of the cavalry. In the fortifications on the right and on the left, the artillerists stood at their guns. Once more a dull boom of a single gun, and then the roar of two hundred pieces discharged at once to cover a sortie.

These Frenchmen were hungry—they were desperate; and now we shall see how the soldier fights when he is in earnest.

Forward! The solid mass of infantry moves out against the Prussian line. They have siege-guns, these Germans, and the sixty-four-pound shell ploughs through the solid mass of uniformed humanity. The gap silently closes, and the mass moves on. Ha! now a hundred field-pieces open at close range with spherical case. There is now behind the moving mass a terrible *debris* of writhing wounded soldiers and quiet dead. Now they double-quick and come up close to the red clay earthworks of the enemy, and the steady long roll of thirty thousand muskets open on what is left of the sortie. Here behind moves Trochu. His aids dash into the smoke a moment

and return with smiles on their faces. They salute, and say:

"They are climbing over into the works!" Trochu motions back to the rear, and the cannons cease their bellowing. The French are in the German works.

Ha! the siege guns—are silent. Do we hear a shout?

Yes, a shout of victory, for the French hold the line of works. There is a spot yonder where the smoke rises in a white cloud, and under it is an incessant roar, as of the attrition of a thousand grinding masses of granite. It moves away. The German line is broken. These are the same blood with those French who moved up the fire-strewn path of Sebastopol, who cheered the Eagles at Austerlitz. But what avails it now. Dead-weight of numbers push them panting back. Over the works again, with three Germans to each desperate Frenchman! Down the escarpment, painting it with their blood; into the ditch, where they lie gasping for a moment and then clamber out and come creeping back—yes, but they come back with honor! With another Trochu France might be free, but history will linger long over the terrible sorties at the siege of Paris. Up the street past us limp men who use a musket for a crutch. Men with blood-stained handkerchiefs bound about their heads sadly smile as they hear our words of praise, but they are too weary to answer, only they raise the right hand to the bloody forehead in military salute. Now come the stretchers with groaning burdens, and soon other hospitals will be opened, for the gay city is now one vast hospital. Said Sturgis, "These French beat the devil when they *do* fight, and they generally want to fight." I felt in no mood for the badinage, and walked slowly to the American Legation.

In two hours I hear the cry of the street gamin with the scanty sheet of newspaper which served during the siege and was sold at one franc.

I step to the door and purchase a copy and read as I walk back to my chair. The account of the sortie is here. Not in the verbiage of the usual Parisian reporter. No;

the people are all in earnest now, but I see the usual headlines and read along with pity in my heart for the useless but brave sacrifice I had seen from a distance. Here is a list of killed and wounded officers. Of course I do not know them, but I read down the list.

"Lieutenant Hippolyte Boh, of the Guards, left dead on the glacis when the sortie fell back." Heavens! And I had forgotten Aimée. I threw the paper down and rapidly dressed again for the street.

When I came into the Quartier St. Germain I seemed to discover sombre shadows along the street I had not noticed before. More silent than ever seemed the quiet of the *quartier*. At the door no *concierge*. No pounding or halooing seemed to attract an inmate of the house.

I tried the heavy latch and the door swung open. Without waiting for further ceremony I pressed on into the wide old parlor. Still all silent. Is the house deserted? I raised my voice and called aloud "Aimée! Aimée!"

I hear a sob, and pushing back the heavy curtains pass into a smaller living-room of the house. Arising from a divan, Aimée extends her arms and says: "It is Monsieur the American. Thank God!"

"Where are the servants, Aimée?" I ask.

"Ah, Heaven! Monsieur, they are gone; they would not remain and starve," and she wept like a child.

"What, is it come to this, my child?" I asked in astonishment.

"Yes, my father has been on duty at the front for a week, and everything is eaten. Monsieur, I too am hungry," and the childish little face looked haggard.

"Aimée, you are a woman in years, and will soon be one in hard experience, I am afraid. We must leave this place before dark. I am afraid the Reds of Paris will soon make a hell of this city. Aimée, what did your father say about me at our last meeting?" and I took her hand.

"Ah, *mon Dieu*! he said if he did not come back you would be to me a father, and he does not come. Now I know what you mean," and with a scream she fell back on the divan in a swoon. I ran for water, and wetting her face and chafing her little hands, I soon restored her to consciousness.

"Aimée," said I, as if talking to a child, "is there any valuable paper, or casket of papers, or anything you wish to take with you? You must come with me to a place of safety. Gather your clothing in as small a compass as possible, and do it instantly, for Heaven only knows how long the streets of Paris will be safe! Secure everything you value in a valise, and be ready soon."

This practical language seemed to inspire her with energy, for she soon gathered her valuables and necessary clothing in a small valise, and turned her back upon her home forever.

No carriage could be procured. The streets were deserted, and we moved away rapidly. The tender feet of the little ward who had fallen under my care seemed all unused to the long walk, but at last we stood in the Ministerial office. A word to my noble chief, Washburne, explained matters, and he simply said:

"Put her in the care of the good woman who cares for our home here. She is the ward of the United States as well as of my Secretary."

Thus Aimée was in a place of safety during the carnival of crime which was soon inaugurated in Paris.

CHAPTER IV.

SUFFOLK : She's beautiful, and therefore to be woo'd ;
She is a woman ; therefore to be won.

THAT ridiculous song of the American war, "Johnny Comes Marching Home," wafted on the frosty air of Paris, told me that Napoleon Smith was approaching my office. But it was not the Napoleon Smith we knew, not in appearance, at least, for the butterfly was out of the crysalis and was soaring in the crisp winter air in a new French uniform of the Infantry Guard Mobile. His cap with red-tipped pompon, was worn very much on one side—in fact, its position on his head looked precarious in regard to its tenure of office—a vagabond, as it had no visible means of support, and looked as though it were held in position by magnetism in his head.

"Smith couldn't you drop that tune, and, if you must whistle or sing, vary the programme occasionally by substituting 'Dixie's Land, or Yankee Doodle ?'" I said, with some asperity.

"I suppose I could, Cap ; but what's the use ? Music is music, and I got attached to that tune in Virginia, and somehow it sticks like a burr. Skewball, says I, is not personal and has no political or moral force ; durned if I don't think it was just put in to fill the measure, like a repeat in a choir anthem in a country church." And he smiled broadly and stroked his waxed mustache. "But say, do you get onto this uniform ? Chivaree de bongsay and au revoir. Well, but won't these French devils fight or anything ? Well, I reckon. I was in that sortie a week ago. I tell you I kept looking for the mounseers to break and gig buck ; but not any for them. It begun to get too warm for yours truly, and I begun to think it was all foolishness when we clambered right up on the

Dutchmen's sixty-four pounder siege-guns, and a little lieutenant spiked two of them, and then when he had lead enough in him to anchor a flat boat, he just yelled out '*Vive la France!*' and passed in his checks like a little man, and we fell back and left him right there amongst the dead Germans and broken gun-carriages, and I know now that a Frenchman will fight. Lord, Cap, *you* knew how it was at Fredericksburg, when the Johnnies laid behind that stone wall and shot Yankees until their muskets got clogged, and every time they told us to go up, we went up—and nearly the whole army went up on that occasion. But I beg the lady's pardon; I don't generally make such long speeches." And he looked over my head, as if talking to somebody. I turned in my chair and saw Aimée who had become accustomed to our hotel, so that she came into all the offices like a child. She stood with open mouth, flashing eyes, and erect form listening to the words of Napoleon Smith as if she was entranced.

"Who is the girl?" said Smith, with a profound bow.

"Aimée," said I, "this is an American friend who has enlisted in the French army. His name is Napoleon Smith."

And then what do you suppose happened? Of all the incongruous occurrences of a sportive fate this was the queerest.

This little hothouse flower—this carefully guarded child—this little hazel-eyed fairy, fell incontinently in love with my noisy, rude, military friend Napoleon Smith, and he—well, he stared for a moment and then blushed, and then turned pale, and lo! *he* was dead in love. Occasionally I think that the two congenial natures out of the billion or two of the inhabitants of this earth come into contact to make an exemplary case of human love for the gods to rejoice over, or perhaps they come together by accident. However it occurs, it is a sight to rejoice heaven and earth.

Aimée floated across the room and seized one of the great hands of the soldier, and said:

"Monsieur Smith, I understand English. I heard you tell of the grand sortie where my father died. He died for France! You have been in the American war, of which I read. Ah! you have been on the Potomac. You have been in the grand escalade of Fredericksburg. My heart is in sympathy with the soldier."

And Smith stood there speechless. His breath came fast, his face was red, and he simply worshipped the little bright-eyed enthusiast who held his hand. At last he plucked up courage to say:

"Mademoiselle must not confound the poor private soldier with the great generals. I was in the ranks—I am in the ranks now; I am unworthy the praise you bestow."

"Did not Monsieur fight for his country?"

"Yes; oh, certainly!"

"Did you not go up to the cannon, to the hill, to the bayonets?"

"Yes, Mademoiselle, always."

"Then it is enough. You are a brave man. I honor you. I respect you."

And the little patriot bowed and went back into another apartment.

"Who is the little angel?" said my excited visitor.

"You are promoting my *protégée* pretty fast," said I, with a smile. "You have got her up to the rank of angel already, and I don't know of many higher grades."

"She is worthy of the highest in the gift of Heaven," he answered. "By George! Mr. Secretary, I have read of such women, but always supposed the descriptions exaggerations. The half has never been told."

Then I told him the story of Aimée and her father and the old Marquis, and how I had brought her home to the Legation during the siege of Paris; and when my story was done, I saw Napoleon Smith turning away and wiping his eyes. Then he said, in a trembling voice:

"It is a clear case with me, Mr. Secretary. I am a gentleman, if no more, and I tell you that I have as good

a right to love a woman as any man; but never on this earth have I seen a woman before who touched me as this little enthusiastic French girl has. I worship her, and I tell you now, as I should, that as her guardian I ask no better privilege or right than to be allowed to share the responsibility of her care. Heavens! I hear her voice yet."

"Mr. Smith," said I drily, "we will talk more of this some other time. I believe you to be a gentleman, and I only stipulate that you meet Aimée always in my company until your prospects, and hers also, are better assured in life. In the meantime, what brought you here to-day?"

"I accept your conditions, and in the circumstances surrounding us all in Paris, I think my chance is as good as yours or anyone else's to assist Aimée. In regard to my visit: Well, I am afraid that my quest after the concealed hoard of the great Bonaparte will be a long and serious one. I am afraid the diagram will prove too dark a chart for me to sail by, and now I confess I see something more important to live for than money. Well, I will tell you, in short, what brought me here, I may in the next sortie turn up my toes, as well as the thousands of comrades who fall around me, and I wish to leave with you for a time these papers in reference to the treasure. If I live, I will call for them; if not, work out the problem yourself or let it sink into oblivion." And he took out the red morocco pocket-book and laid it on my desk. I took it and locked it up securely in my desk, and turned to speak again to Smith, when the door slammed shut and a voice said:

"It will float on water, as it oughter, and will make suds with hard or soft water, and doesn't waste with dampness or crack in dry weather. Save every wrapper till you get twenty five, and send to the home office in Boston and get a set of silver knives and forks."

I heard a groan, and turned in time to see Napoleon Smith slide to the floor in convulsions.

"Ho!" said Sturgis, "unbutton his shirt, lay him out straight with his head a little high and then give him air. Hum—here's a Grand Army badge. American by Jocks! Been hurt sometime. Here it is in his head. Been shot and the bullet cut out. Brain affected. Good many that way without bullets in their heads. Here he comes around all right. Now then."

Napoleon Smith sighed as he looked around and then took from my hand a glass of wine. Then he whispered:

"I have had another attack of vertigo. I have them often lately, and fall as if I was shot. I feel the shot again in my head."

"Then that is why you carry your head so one side," I remarked.

"Yes; I got that bullet at Gettysburg the last day. It never amounted to much, and healed up in a week. But of late I am often rendered insensible with no apparent cause." And he arose weakly, brushed his clothing and put on his hat.

"I spotted it the first thing," said Sturgis. "Lord! I saw hundreds of such heads at Cold Harbor, Chattanooga and Nashville. You thought you were only slightly hurt and you had a fatal wound, only it will take you off sometime when you are not expecting it."

Napoleon Smith smiled as he heard the familiar New England twang, and weakly but good-humoredly put out his right hand with the usual army exclamation, "Shake!"

"Toobyshure," said Sturgis, "I am in soap. A new thing. Four cakes to the pound, stamped in a mold with a sunflower in the centre, and a beautiful chromo card goes with every cake. Here, put one in your pocket. It is made from vegetable oil, will lighten toil and will never spoil. Save the wrappers and get a large mezzotint of the capture of Major André sent carefully packed in a paste-board case to any address. Read the directions on the wrapper."

Laughing at the well-remembered thrift and business push of his countryman, Smith bowed himself out.

"There, I will know him again," said Sturgis. "There is nothing like soap to introduce a man into society and make friends of the women. But say, he wants to send that head of his to the doctor's and get it fixed, or it will leave him in the lurch sometime, I am pushin' business, and when peace comes I will control the soap trade of Paris. I put a cake in every hospital in Paris this morning, and put a cromo card in every ward. Strike while the sun shines and make hay while the iron is hot. *Bon, jour*, my friend!" And he jauntily placed his tall hat on his head and bowed himself out. He lingered for a moment at the outer door, and I went and looked at the casing. He had stuck some kind of an infernal plaster on the wood which I could not remove. It read, "Use the Great Wildflower Soap!"

CHAPTER VII.

FALSTAFF : Ay, Hal ; 'tis hot, 'tis hot ; there's that will sack a city.

WHEN Napoleon Smith stepped out on the street he heard a confused hum of voices, and stopped for a moment to listen. He had become accustomed to the roar of musketry and the dull undertone of the heavy artillery, and above it all the high tenor of cheers given forth in the charge of troops in the terrible sorties.

This noise which he heard was a new sound which the terrible animal we call Paris was giving forth.

The thunder and lightning are common adjuncts of a storm, and the pedestrian only hurries his gait to attain shelter before the storm breaks; but there is a low, dreadful murmur preceding the terrible cyclone of the West which arrests the circulation of the blood and leaves the cheek colorless and the knees tremulous with fear. The cattle listen with erect heads and tense nerves, and stand for a moment like statues of bronze. The birds fly low and send out shrill cries while seeking safety amid deep, low thickets in river bottoms. Man listens to the long, low groan of nature, and some instinct in him, like that of the beast and bird, prompts him to lie down under some rock or deep indentation in the earth's surface and wait with bated breath for the terrible onslaught. This cry of nature is a gasp of agony as of a stifling creature in an exhausted air-chamber. Hot blasts of air, as if poured from a furnace, are succeeded by cool, wandering zephyrs, as fragments of some norther torn away in shreds from the fluttering mantle of the storm.

It was the moaning of a human cyclone which our hero heard.

As he turned into the Rue Honoré he heard a roar as if the lid had been lifted from pandemonium. From a side street he had passed a dark tide of humanity poured into the Rue Honoré behind him. In the air above the surging mass fluttered a red flag. Here and there red caps glinted on the surface of the packed street like petals of flowers on a flood which has ravished a garden. They close up behind him. He turned into a side street, but down that came another tributary rivulet of seething humanity to swell the river in the main avenue. The Commune is up!

When Paris casts out her devil of tyranny it seeketh rest in dry places, and finding none it returneth to the house whence it was cast out, and finding it swept and garnished it taketh to itself seven devils worse than the first and returneth to its house, and the last state of Paris is worse than the first.

Napoleon cast out, and Favre in power, the red devil of the Commune comes last to make bloody the dregs of the cup of Paris.

"Down with the Garde Mobile! Kill the *mouchard!*"

Our hero feels a stinging blow, and partly falls. He is on his knees. His gorgeous cap is tossed in the mud. A hundred feet trample on him, and his coat is torn from his back. His face is covered with warm blood, which trickles from his head. He feels faint, and is about to repeat a simple prayer and die, when a strong hand grasps the collar of his bloody shirt, and he stands on his feet. The crowd closes round him, and though he is faint he cannot fall. He is wedged in the mass of yelling humanity. A red cap is pulled down on his bleeding head, and he turns his eyes downward to view himself.

He is not now the dapper member of the Garde Mobile. His shirt is his only garment in sight. It is stained with blood. A voice whispers in his ear:

"He who enters here leaves soap behind. He's got to! Save the wrappers and send 'em in. Oh, no, this 'aint no

chromo in fourteen colors. I guess not! Brace up and go the whole figure, my son."

Our hero tries to turn his head and thank the owner of the nasal voice, but he can only shed weak tears, which mingle with the blood on his face; but he feels a strong, nervous hand seizing his, and he returns its pressure.

"We are just as good communists as any of them now. *Vive la Commune!* Hurrah, and damn your eyes, too! Warranted to keep in any climate, and make a lather in any water. Down with law and order! Up with the devil and all his angels! Holler, Smith, *Vive la Commune!*"

Napoleon Smith weakly responded in a cheer, and on they went. The crowd has been pressing on all this time. Once in a while the crash of glass was heard, and a store was gutted and left desolate in less time than it takes to tell it. Once or twice the scream of a woman was heard like the sharp cry of a drowning person, and then all was over and the crowd surged on. Now they emerge in a large square. In the centre is a beautiful heroic bronze column. It is the Place Vendôme, and a shriek of mad joy goes up as the thousands see that already great cables are stretched from the top of the column, and Paris wants to pull down that first Bonaparte whom they once worshipped.

Thousands of hands grasp the ropes, and now the beautiful column rocks on its base, and now a hundred thousand throats swell in chorus as the mounted figure sways a moment, and then crash it comes to the ground and lies in fragments. It is another Samson, and kills in its fall the enemies who came out to make sport. Now the tide sets in another direction, and our hero feels that if history is to be made he will see the show even at the expense of a broken head. He cannot escape. He is a waif hurrying on he knows not where.

"To the *Pont Royale!*"

Dreamily he knows they are near the Seine. He is jammed against the rails on the side of the bridge, and for a moment he thinks of dropping over into the chill blue tide and ending the agony. Now a ribald song starts up near the head of the advancing mob, and a thousand, ten thousand, forty thousand voices swell the horrible music. That was what he heard and should have fled from.

When Paris sings it is time for the guillotine in the Place de Grêve. When Paris is happy, then make ready the cemetery and the lime-hole.

It is the murmur of the human cyclone. Now the mob is approaching a magnificent building fronting on a beautiful park. Those behind crowd on those before, until the front of the mass of gasping humanity is jammed up against the façade of the grand structure. Now the red monster of the Commune has suitable diversion. The paving stones are torn up and sent flying through the splendid windows.

"Crash! ha, ha! It is good for the aristocrats!"

"More, many more! Down with the nest! tear it down!"

A crackling sound is heard, and as our hero looks up he sees the sky filling with smoke. He tries to move back. He might as well put his shoulder to the Pyrenees and start them from their base.

Great beams are brought, and he hears the crash of falling walls. Beautiful carpets and tapestries are tossed rom upper windows and wrap the crowd in gayer colors. White marble statues, of great cost and exquisite beauty, are hurled out on the crowd, levelling in death all beneath. Gold and silver ornaments twinkle about the mob as they fall into the mud.

The fire gains on the dismantled and crumbling ruin. It is warm where Napoleon Smith stands, and he looks for a way of escape.

"Here comes the guard. Death to the guard!"

A regiment forms across the street. An officer attempts to read to the drunken and crazed Communists. A mad shout answers him, and paving stones and revolver bullets and every form of missile is hurled at the handsome, compact line.

Our hero hears a short command. The muskets drop to a level, and he looks along the blue barrels to the bowed pompons on the caps.

Another sharp command.

A sheet of flame leaps across the street like lightning and a thousand bullets smite the solid mass of flesh. They press back. The dead are still on their feet. They cannot fall.

Napoleon Smith feels a yielding broken sash at his back. He falls through. He falls seemingly a long distance, and is unconscious.

When he awakes he is very cold. He sits up and shivers. The moonlight comes in through a broken sash above him, and he looks at his hands. They are covered with blood. He puts one hand up to his face and finds it covered with filth and dried, crackling gouts of blood. His breast is naked, and on his shoulders are the remnants of a shirt. His trousers are now covered with frozen and dried blood.

He speaks sarcastically, "I am now a Red!" His teeth chatter and he tries to rise. If he had only some garment to shut out the cold then he would not die. How his limbs creak with stiffness, and he thinks he has not a spot on his body which has not been bruised. Yonder at that window something flutters. He creeps to it and pulls it in and examines it. It is a costly tapestry of the time of Louis XII. He laughs grimly and wraps it around his shoulders.

Now, what time is it? Yonder light is the light of the moon. It must be midnight. Shall he lie down until morning, or essay the streets of turbulent Paris at night? He is speculative and dreamy, and he falls to tracing an arabesque pattern in the tesselated floor of the

salon. It must have been a dining-room, he argues, or a kitchen in some grand house, and it had this costly inlaid pavement for a floor. He follows the figure dreamily with his eye around and around in flowering convolutions until the lines reach the centre of the pattern, and there in the centre is a bright copper N. That he thinks a curious design. Now the moon wheels along as he dreams, and at last one long beam ends on the glittering copper N. It is strange, but somehow it fixes his attention. It looks familiar. It dawns upon him. His heart beats tumultuously, and on his knees he creeps to it. He touches it with a reverent, trembling hand, and then says, in a gasping tone :

" Across the room is another pattern of this arabesque, and in its centre is another copper N."

What a sight! The bloody, dishevelled wretch, the rich floor covered with ornament, the wheeling beam of light ! Square across the room he creeps, and, measuring the distance with his eye, lies down and gropes with his hand.

" Here it is. Another copper N !" and his head whirls in a mad waltz, and again he becomes unconscious. How long he lies thus he never knows, but as the moon sank and the dull dark precedes the light, he stands shivering on the pavement and looking up at the smouldering ruins of a palace. The wind whistles through the open casements, and dully, from time to time, is heard the fall of loosened blocks of stone or masses of brick.

" I shall know it again, if I live," he says, with chattering teeth, and creeps away.

He passes a group of night-hawks with haggard eyes, and as they see his smeared face and wrapping of tapestry, they merely shout to him as he passes : " Down with the Aristocrats !"

He shouts a hoarse reply and passes on. They find him asleep on the steps of the American Legation, and the servants are about to call for *gensdarme* to carry him away when I recognize him.

"For Heaven's sake, Smith, what is the matter?"

"The Commune," he whispers, and faints again.

Aimée comes in during the morning, and then we have a time. She must wash his bruised head. He must be cared for in a royal manner, and, sobbing and singing, the girl manages to work herself more intensely in love than ever; and Smith—well, he acts as though he would be willing to pass through a worse siege if he might have the same nurse. She even attempts to console him by humming his favorite air, and makes of it a cross between the "Marsellaise" and a waltz. This was a strange scene for a staid respectable office of an American Ministry, and I confess I regarded it in some doubt. On my sofa the sorry-looking victim of the Commune; in an office-chair at his side Mademoiselle Aimée. But war and siege and the Commune produced strange scenes. But I was thrown into confusion by the announcement that the Marquis Larue asked instant audience of me, I received him at the door all smiles and suavity, and he said, in a friendly tone:

"Ah, I perceive here my niece, Mademoiselle Aimée, I came instantly to the Quartier St. Germain when I heard of the lamentable end of Lieutenant Boh. Aimée, my child, come home with me. I extend my arms; my heart is open;" and with a sigh he drew out his snowy cambric handkerchief and applied it to his eyes.

Aimée arose and glared upon him with anger flashing from her eyes.

"Monsieur, the American is my friend. It was the wish of my father. I remain here."

"Ah, Aimée, but the world will talk. You must remember your birth. You must trust your uncle;" and he tried to look friendly and compassionate.'

"Never!" said Aimée. "I will never trust you. I say no more now. Leave me in peace."

"Perhaps Monsieur the American can show by what right he detains my niece? He will have a chance to explain it at the Palais de Justice;" and he grinned with anger.

"Monsieur," said I, "I had strict orders from Lieutenant Boh to care for his daughter if he should die. In particular he warned me to beware of Marquis Larue. You perceive this is the office of the American Minister, and under the Stars and Stripes all shall be protected alike. I will make no explanation unless it be to a government which puts a demand in legal form."

"I see," he hissed in answer. "Well, adieu, Mademoiselle. Wait until the *canaille* is put down. Wait until a better class come into power, and then we will see who will govern my niece. Remember Mademoiselle, I wanted to be your friend. If I be your enemy it is because you choose it." And he left us, white with anger.

"I would like to meet him once face to face, as men meet, and see what he means by threatening women," said Napoleon Smith as he sank back on his pillow.

CHAPTER VIII.

MERCUTIO: No, 'tis not so deep as a well, nor so wide as a church door; but 'tis enough, 'twill serve: ask for me to-morrow, and you shall find me a grave man.

WHEN Napoleon Smith returned to his company, a pleasant surprise awaited him. After he had explained his sorry appearance and torn uniform, he was instantly installed as the hero of the hour. He had lived through a raid of the Commune and had come out alive, and it was a miracle. But at the regimental parade in the afternoon, when he had been rehabiliated and shone in a new uniform, and white cross-belts, he was startled to hear his name read aloud in a general order. What was to come now? A trial for desertion, or a drumming from the ranks for his absence of a few days while under the gentle treatment of Aimée at the Consulate? At last he was called to the front, and, with a half-dozen others, was right and left faced and marched to the centre in front of the gorgeous Adjutant. "Now for it," he thought. Then the Adjutant advanced and fixed in his button-hole the Ribbon of the Legion of Honor, and placed in his hand a commission as Lieutentant. He heard read something about the sortie of the 20th, and the spiking of two siege-guns, and then the tears blurred his vision and his heart swelled tumultuously. Ah! how well these French know how to make soldiers fight. Pity they had not had leaders to wisely organize them and lead them to victory in 1870 as in other years. Other honors were conferred on the rest of the files of men by his side, and then, outward face, march, and he was in his place in the ranks. When the companies broke rank in the company streets, the French enthusiasm broke loose. Howls and yells, with cries of "*Vive l'Americaine!*" filled the air. Our hero

was flushed with happiness, and his last franc went down to the nearest café for wines and cigars for the merry comrades.

The next morning he was summoned to the presence of General Trochu. After passing the guards at the door he reached the office of the great General who was only to hold Paris for a time by the bravest defence men ever made, and at last yield to the inevitable and surrender. But in that short decisive campaign he was fated to be the leader who should make French valor show once more at its brightest. As our hero entered he noticed the look of weariness on the Commander's face as he bent over a map of Paris and its fortifications. Hopeless despair was written in every careworn wrinkle on his face, but it was the dangerous despair of the feline race, which shows in spasmodically working claws and gleaming teeth. A dozen subordinate officers stood about him, respectfully waiting for orders. With a hasty word and deprecating motion of the hand he dismissed them all from the room. When he was alone with his visitor he turned his chair and faced him. He looked with wonder for a time and then said :

"You are Napoleon Smith ?"

"Yes, General."

"Ha, Smith, do you know who you resemble in features ?"

"Yes, General."

"Was it for that they call you Napoleon Smith ?"

"No, General ; I was named so in infancy."

"Will you tell me why ?"

"It is a long story, General, and I would rather not. I am not ashamed of the name, and, so far, the name has not been ashamed of me."

"I have heard so, and it is for that reason I send for you. You were in the American army in the last great war ?"

"I was, General."

"And I saw you in the sortie of the 20th, in front of Mont Rouge?"

"Yes, General."

"Well, come here and look at this map. Do you see here at this point the works of the enemy are very near. At this point the line is yet far away. In this space between the lines Uhlans burn cottages and put villages to ransom. In this open space have formed bands of robbers who rob the living and the dead. It is the advantage of the German to thus terrify the people and make them miserable, but to allow it is the shame of France. Behold here, too, are spots from which Paris may be shelled and destroyed. You are intelligent and may be trusted. I wish you to take a detail of ten men and make a reconnoissance as secretly as possible along the St. Denis road, and as far as possible between the lines, and discover for me if any advance is prepared for, and if possible discover the parties of irresponsible persons who rob and torment the people. I could trust my own people to fight, but see—to-day a Frenchman is an Orleanist, tomorrow an Imperialist, and, bah! next day a Communist. Curse the Commune!" and his lips trembled with anger.

"But, my American friend, am I asking too much if I tell you to watch and see if you cannot find the villain and traitor who carries to the Germans the news of preparation for every sortie I make, so that I shed French blood like water in vain?" And he sighed.

"General," said Smith, "it is what we call in America a roving commission. Give me a furlough for a week and a pass through every line of our army, and I will try to bring you some news; or if I do not come back, you will know I have died in good company with my detail of French soldiers."

"Said like an American! And see, I have written in the pass, 'Captain Smith will pass to and fro as he may wish through every arm of the service, and all guards, until further orders.—TROCHU, *General.*'"

"Lieutenant Smith, not Captain," said our hero blushing. "It may make comment, and cause delay, if the guards see the mistake."

"My friend, if I write it Captain, it will be Captain. It is no mistake;" and the General swung around in his chair and resumed his study of the map. Napoleon Smith saluted and went out.

The terrors of legitimate warfare are always supplemented by the lawless acts of mercenary wretches who hang on the outskirts of an army to enrich themselves by the blood and suffering of patriots who lay all on the altar of their country. What is left by the tax-collector who gathers money to support the army, is gathered up by the camp-follower or the wild, dashing cavalry of the enemy. The guerilla, like the jackal, follows to lick the bones left by the lions of the army. The old men and children and weak women fall victims to the cowardice which hides from the face of the soldier, but is brave in the presence of the weak and unprotected. The scourge of the peasantry of France was the Uhlans, If we condemn the British for invoking the aid of savage Indian hordes in our own Revolution, or the same nation for arming the Sepoys in India, what shall we say of the half-savage Uhlans used by Germany in the Franco-Prussian war? They fell upon France like locusts. Every scene of rural felicity was marred by these screaming, shouting savages. They rode like Centaurs, and had roving commissions to levy tribute and frighten France into subjection. Vineyards were forgotten with their vintage, and grain was trampled into the earth. Smoke went up from burning villages where some drunken Uhlan had met his death, or the village was ransomed by the paying of its last franc as the price of indemnity from destruction. Added to this list of terrors for non-combatants was the raid of the local robber. Shivering travellers were left naked, and cowering villagers spoke in whispers of the bandit and his followers. Who was it in every case?—"Le Noir."

No one could describe him. No one seemed to have seen him, and yet on every hand his terror was manifest. He, too, had his system of indemnity and ransom, and villagers and travellers whispered, "It is Le Noir."

Into this pandemonium of suffering and death between the lines our hero emerged as he passed the last videttes of the French guards on the next morning. The weary and disheartened soldiers looked with curiosity on the little detail of officer and a dozen men as they passed down the road out of sight. It had all the sadness of an unspoken farewell, and our new Captain seemed to appreciate the danger of his mission. The wintry sun was just coming into sight as he emerged on the disputed territory between the lines Here and there he passed the still smoking remains of a farm house. The trees cut away for fuel by friend or foe, and along the hedges an occasional domestic fowl ran in fear. At one point the ground was furrowed thickly with recent graves. The white frost was resting on the frozen clay where it was rounded up over German or Frenchman who had fallen here in terrible conflict. Turning aside from the highway, Smith led his little company toward a cottage still standing in a field at the left. It was apparently deserted. No smoke arose from the chimney, and the fences torn down about it, showed how it had been ground between the two armies. Here for a time our hero determined to wait until he could ascertain the location of the German videttes and the roads he was expected to guard or reconnoitre.

"My men," said he, "we are to be careful, and I have selected each one of you for his wisdom and his courage. You must depend on me and obey me, and then we shall go back into Paris with honor and with information of value to our General. Jacques, you will take your musket, load it carefully, and then advance through the little wood in front and see what is beyond. Then come back and report. François, you will go over the hill yonder toward the enemy, and go forward until you discover where are

the videttes, and if possible the army. Then come back and report."

The two soldiers silently marched away, and the rest of the little company sat down to rest in the door-yard of the cottage. Contemplatively the little band munched their scanty morning ration of hard bread and waited for the return of the scouts. François returned first, and reported that on passing over the hill to the front he had come upon the vidette of the German army, who was comfortably ensconced in a clump of bushes smoking a long pipe. Lying down and listening, François had discovered that the roads were being prepared to bring forward heavy guns to the hill in front.

"Very good, François," said Smith; "you have done well;" and he made a memorandum on a map he carried in his pocket.

Very soon Jacques came in from the little wood in front with his cap very much on one side, and his musket carried in a very military and precise manner.

"Monsieur le Captain," said he, it is a little village beyond the wood, St. Marie le Brun, and it has a famous cabaret."

"I knew it by the cock of your shako," said Smith. "What else?"

"The Uhlans have been there, and a good man who ran away from them is dead in the road. The houses are closed, and I had to pound on the door of the cabaret a long time before mine host appeared. He has good wine," and Jacques drew a long-necked bottle out of his pocket. A laugh went around the circle, and Jacques was voted the king of scouts and general of the commissariat.

"We will visit the village," said Smith, "and learn more of these Uhlans. I wish to make their acquaintance." Hurriedly slinging their accoutrements, they went through the woods and entered the village. Here and there a shutter was carefully opened as they passed. Some of the houses were pierced by the heavy solid shot of the siege-guns. A few bullet-marks were on the walls

of the houses, and how silent was the little village as it rested horror stricken beneath the bare boughs of the chestnut trees! As they halted in front of the little village hostelry, Smith heard a familiar voice within.

"Hang her right here behind the bar. That 'ere is a genuine American chromo of Cleopatra in her golden barge as she appeared after using the sunflower soap only six months. These 'ere little yaller bills are in French and will tell you all about it. Save the wrappers till you get——"

"What the devil!" said Smith; "it is my friend of the Commune."

"Right you are," said Sturgis. "So you got out all right, eh?"

"Yes, but what under the blue canopy are you doing here between the lines? Great guns, man, you will be picked up by either side and hung for a spy!" and Smith looked angry.

"Business is like a hand cart, and all it wants is pushing. Between the lines I get the bulge on both armies, and the Teuton and the Gaul both alike gaze with rapture on the advertising cards of the Great Sunflower Soap Company. Try a cake. It'll wash, shave or shampoo. It makes the skin soft, the gums hard, and the conscience tender. It removes freckles, tan, pimples and warts. Every cake weighs a pound, and every pound makes a family happy;" and Sturgis winked profoundly.

"That's all right," said Smith, "and it's all very funny; but, my friend, you are too brave a man to fool your life away here. Believe me, I am grateful for your kindness last week, and take my advice and get back into Paris."

"Thanks, Lieutenant. Perhaps I have my duties in Paris and a mission as well as yourself. All the same, I thank you." And Sturgis spoke seriously.

"The Uhlans! the Uhlans!" shouted the soldiers at the door.

"Gentlemen," said Sturgis, "I will have to ask you to excuse me. Uhlans do not use soap. Pictures would be fooled away on 'em. Bye-bye!" and he ran behind the little bar and disappeared down cellar.

"For Heaven's sake," said the old tavern keeper, "do not stay and fight those savage devils or they will burn the village!" and he wrung his hands.

"Fall in!" said Smith. "Forward, double-quick!" and he ran with his men across the open fields.

The squad of Uhlans dashed up to the cabaret and imperiously demanded wine for the whole thirsty party. It was instantly brought out by the trembling, obsequious old tavern-keeper, without a thought of pay. There were about a score of the rough riders, mounted on nervous little horses as wild as their masters. They were a fearful looking foe to meet. Mustachioed and bronzed and fierce, they were detested and feared by the French as the devil might be. After drinking, their leader turned and gazed across the open fields at the retreating squad of scouts. A smile went over the fierce face and he muttered a word of command. The troop wheeled like a piece of machinery and dashed away after Napoleon Smith and his detail.

"God have mercy on them!" said the old tavern-keeper, as he shaded his eyes and looked after them; "and the lieutenant was a noble-looking youth, too. But they will all die!"

Our hero saw the Uhlans coming also, but he did not hurry his pace at all. In fact, he smiled more broadly than did the leader of the Uhlans. In front he saw a little rivulet partly covered with ice. On each side of it stood the wild bunch grass, indicating the morass or quaking marsh found in the Paris basin. He crossed the rivulet on the shaking bogs, and then turned and marched parallel with the stream.

The faces of his little band of followers turned white as they saw him take out his heavy revolver and strike on the stock to shake down the priming.

"Heavens!" said Jacques, "you will not stay to fight the savages?"

"You have heard, it is possible, of a device sometimes called the Yankee trick;" and Smith smiled.

"Yes," said François, with chattering teeth, "but it is not a time for such child's-play. Show us the trick lieutenant, when we arrive in camp. Now is a good time to run."

"Will you stay and see the Yankee trick now?" said Smith fiercely.

"Yes, Lieutenant;" and they cocked their pieces resolutely.

"Well, then, behold!" and Smith turned, and raising his revolver, fired it at the advancing Uhlans.

A jeering laugh was heard, and the long lances were laid in rest ready to transfix the little group of infantry.

"Lie down," said Smith; and he set the example by calmly lying down facing the thundering squad of Uhlans.

On they came, with heads low and knees well in, while the lances were firmly gripped under the right arm. The Frenchmen hear the horses snort, and some curious oaths roll out as the fierce riders strike the morass. A few plunges and the whole mass are floundering in the half frozen quagmire.

"Now, aim low and empty those saddles," said Smith. "That is my Yankee trick. It seems too much like murder, but these rascals need a lesson."

Volley after volley the Frenchmen poured into the writhing mass, and only stopped when a half-dozen muddy Uhlans had pulled their steeds out and were galloping back toward the village.

"This defeat of the cavalry of the Prussians will never be written, but it was a grand strategic victory;" and François swung his cap.

"It is well that I had read of this peculiar soil and of these same morasses in the Paris basin," said Napoleon Smith.

"Well, and what next? Is it a fete-day out at Versailles?" said Jacques. "Look and see the cabriolet driving along the road as if it were going to a fair."

It certainly was a strange sight to see a cabriolet, closely curtained, with a driver on the front, demurely beating a tall horse which trotted along at a stolid pace. Smith turned his little company of men toward the road in order to intercept the carriage. As they filed into the highway and drew up in line the cabriolet approached at a trot and our hero said "Halt!" in a sharp tone. The driver reined in the tall steed so abruptly that he nearly sat down on his haunches, and Smith heard a querulous voice behind the curtains say,

"If they be French soldiers, tell them I have a passport from Trochu."

"Well then," said our hero, "they are French soldiers; so let us see your pass."

"Here it is," and a trembling hand reached out through the curtains a written paper.

After a glance, Smith said, "You have made a strange mistake. This is a pass from the Crown Prince Frederick of Prussia. I think you will remain here with us."

"I gave you the wrong paper. Here is the right one; give me the other one back again," said the voice, which evidently went with the hand.

"This pass is all right," said Smith, "and is signed by Trochu. It is strange that you have a pass from both armies. Let me see what is the name of the bearer. The Marquis Larue. Aha! I will keep the German pass. I smell a rat here! Well, drive on; I dare not stop you when you have Trochu's pass; but I am tempted to do it. By George! if I had my way, you would walk." And as he turned away he thoughtfully sang a stave of his favorite, "Johnny Comes Marching Home."

As the notes rang out a scream was heard in the closely curtained cabriolet, which was quickly smothered, evidently by a rough hand. The driver whipped up the tall

horse and tried to go on, but Napoleon Smith calmly cocked a revolver and said :

" Stop that infernal hearse instantly, or I will loophole you in a minute !"

The tall horse was again pulled up on his haunches, and our hero rudely tore aside the curtains of the cabriolet, and with a scream of joy, a little weeping, dishevelled, angry woman sprang into his arms.

" Good Heavens ! Aimée !"

" Monsieur Napoleon, the American !" and the plump little arms were flung around his neck. For one ecstatic moment our hero pressed the wet cheek of the beautiful girl to his own and then asked angrily :

" How came you here, my darling ?"

" It was my uncle, the Marquis, in the carriage. Stole me away while I was walking in the street. Ah, for what, God knows !" and she wept again, and laid her face on his shoulder.

" Snatch the old villain out of the carriage, men!" said Smith,

Very hastily this order was complied with, and with his wig awry and his cravat under his left ear, and his coat split up the back, the cringing old scoundrel stood at the road trembling with rage.

" Is it so you, a French officer, treat gentlemen who travel on Trochu's pass ?" said the Marquis.

" Yes, and maybe worse, if I find that they also have a pass from the enemy signed by their chief officer. I could hang you and then make a clear case with this paper," and Smith took out the German pass.

" Tie his hands, men, and put him back in the carriage. Aimée, my darling, you will also get in and we will go back to Paris. How fortunate I found you here !" And he placed her again in the cabriolet.

With a military escort on each side and Napoleon Smith walking sedately in front, thus they turned down a by-road into the forest through which our hero and his company had approached the village of the cabaret.

Scarcely had they passed through the low undergrowth which hedged the forest, when a dozen rifle-shots rang out, the tall horse was shot dead as well as four of Smith's men, and in a moment a crowd of red-capped demons surrounded the carriage.

"This may be called a rather busy day," said Napoleon Smith, as he shot down a tall, bearded desperado, and tried to reach the door of the carriage, where for a moment he saw the agonized face of Aimée; but even as he cocked again the smoking revolver he felt the sharp blow of a bullet smiting his head, remembered dimly hearing the words, "Captain Le Noir," and some orders to cease firing, and with a warm tide of blood pouring down his face he became unconscious.

CHAPTER IX.

PATROCLUS : To this effect, Achilles, have I moved you ;
A woman impudent and mannish grown
Is not more loath'd than an effeminate man
In time of action.

"IT is good for the toilet, laundry or the bath. Warranted free from deleterious oils or harsh alkalies. Well, if this ain't a picnic in a side-bar buggy, you may stuff me for a trout ! If music be the food of love, play on : play it on me all you want to. If this is French etiquette, why jest send me four volumes with a supplement, and take it in soap ! The dramatic William remarked something about a tide in the affairs of men, if taken at the flood, would lead to fortune. Well, I'm tied, now bring on your flood ! The only soap that will bear a chemical analysis—"

"I should know that voice. Is that you, Sturgis ?' and Napoleon Smith tried to open his swollen eyes.

"Yours truly, Nehemiah Sturgis, General Agent ;" and Smith heard a terrible sigh.

"Where are we, Sturgis ?" said Smith.

"Somewhere between the forty-eighth and fiftieth parallel, and about two degrees east of Greenwich. That is about as near as I can come to it." And again Sturgis groaned.

"How did you come mixed up with us anyhow ?" said our hero.

"I heard a woman scream, and some rapid firing, and I lit in and took a hand ; but I didn't have capital enough to stand the assessments, and they froze me out before I got any dividends. Great Scott ! Cap, I have got a lump on my head as big as a goose egg !" Again he groaned.

"Where is the Marquis? Where is Aimée? Oh, Sturgis, where is she?" And Smith tried to arise, but discovered that his hands and feet were tied.

"Why, the Marquis is tied, over in a corner yonder, and Aimée lies asleep on a bunch of blankets in the other corner. Can't you see?" said Sturgis.

"No, I cannot see. I suppose my eyes are covered with blood. Where are we, anyhow?" said Smith.

"I give it up. We are in a big stone building that looks like a skating-rink gone to seed, or a democratic convention wigwam sold out for rent. It has a stone floor and the tall windows are all gone. Part of the roof is gone and the door is made of planks. If the devil didn't appear to be running the establishment, I should say it was an old church. A durned sight of use churches and soap would be to this ungodly crowd! But while the lamp holds out to burn, 'the nimble penny is better than a slow sixpence!'" And he tried to whistle.

"Why do you speak thus?" said Smith. Whose hands have we fallen into?"

"Captain Le Noir's, as I make out from what French I understand, and he is the biggest robber and bandit unhung!" And he kept up his doleful whistling.

"Where are the robbers now, Sturgis?"

"From the noise, I should say they are in another room, behind that little pulpit, playing pool for the drinks, and a big row going on over a disputed ball. Can't you hear 'em?" said Sturgis.

"Well, I guess I understand it now," said our hero. "We are in an old ruined abbey or church, and this is the rendezvous of Le Noir's band. We are held for ransom, and that is all. Money is what these scoundrels want. We are safe enough. What time of day is it?"

"In order to be accurate, you will have to ask the big red-whiskered devil who got my watch. To make a guess, I would say it was about ten o'clock in the fore-

noon, and no preparations for breakfast yet." And Sturgis sighed like a porpoise.

"Well," said our hero, "I think I am about as near the end of my rope as I ever was, and I don't see any way out of this."

"I have allus desired to make the tour of France, but, Cap, I guess we struck it in a bad time. France has been called lively, and I like to see a nation have some grit and push, but blame my skin if I wouldn't like a leetle calm for meditation about now," said Sturgis. At this moment a couple of the women who lived with the band in the ruins, came in with towels and a ewer of water and asked in French:

"Which is the Captain Smith?"

Sturgis pointed to our hero, and they knelt beside him, and, placing the ewer on the floor, commenced to wash his wounds. As soon as the coagulated blood was washed out of his curling locks and drabbled mustache, our hero struggled to open his swollen eyes.

It was as he thought from the description Sturgis gave him. They were in a long room with stone floors and lofty columns of carved stone, and in one end a broken chancel or desk. It was the ruin of an old abbey in an obscure, deserted graveyard. Great trees had grown up among the graves, and their bare boughs reached in through the empty casements of the windows. Beyond a little door behind the desk he could hear the shouts and laughter of the band of desperate men. With his wounds bandaged and his face washed Smith felt that he had a new lease of life. Fondly he turned his eyes and sought out the childish form of Aimée asleep on the cushions of the cabriolet and covered with a coarse blanket. When his toilet was complete one of the women went away and returned with a cup of coffee and some food. His hands and limbs were unbound, and he stretched himself and fell to with a good appetite. When the women left him one of them told him in French,

which he began to understand, that after his meal the Captain Le Noir wished to see him.

"Sturgis," said Smith, in a low tone, "I am going to get away from here. My duty as a soldier comes before all else. I must get into Paris and report to Trochu. But yonder lies a little woman for whom I would die. Yonder is her uncle, Marquis Larue, and he would profit by her death. How can I leave them here together? Sturgis, I begin to think there is method in your madness, and that yon are a brave, cool man. Will you promise me to remain with Aimée yonder and care for her until you hear from me?"

"I will stay by her, Cap, as long as there is a tune in the accordion. I see you are onto me, Cap. Go right on and do business, and your drafts will be honored at this office as long as there is a nickel. They are coming after you now. Whenever you think of that leetle gal, think of Sturgis somewhere in the same town with both eyes open." And he wiped away a tear.

"We will see the captain now," said the woman who approached him.

As he passed the sleeping little Aimée he stooped and pressed the first kiss on the tear-stained cheek, and then limped on behind his guide with a swelling heart. Behind the chancel the door swung back, and they passed down a long room filled with the desperate followers of the cruel Le Noir. They were mostly young men, scarcely bearded or mustached, but here and there were the rough-bearded desperadoes of the faubourg, or deserters from the army, thieves and murderers by profession and practice. Contempt, not fear, filled the mind of our hero as he passed amid the offensive crowd. He noted a look of respect which he did not understand as he passed along. At the end of the room another door was passed, and he was pushed in with the remark:

"Captain Le Noir, this is Captain Smith."

Smith looked around in astonishment. He saw only a boyish figure sitting on a divan, and as he looked up he

desisted for a moment from paring the nails on a shapely hand.

"Then you are an American?" said the boy, in good English.

"I am an American. Perhaps I am the one you wished to see;" and Smith smiled.

"You are a brave man. I saw you and your men annihilate the squad of Uhlans. I read also of you at the sortie in front of Mont Rouge. I love to meet brave men!" and the boy's eyes flashed with excitement.

"I thank you for your kind words, but I came in to meet Captain Le Noir," said Smith.

"I am Captain Le Noir," said the youth.

For a moment Smith was angry, then he looked carefully at the dapper little youth who sat before him. The trim little foot was cased in patent leather, and on the heels were silver spurs. The face was guiltless of mustache. The hair was cut quite short, and fell in curls around his head. On the table were lying a pair of American revolvers mounted in gold. As Smith noted the smooth cheek, now carrying beneath its brown a tinge of color and on the red lips a provoking smile, he said: "Well, I'm——"

"Not hardly," said the smiling youth. "You expected to meet a fierce giant, armed at all points and bearded like a pard. That is not the kind of bandit who succeeds in the nineteenth century. Then you have heard that I kill for sport and wade in gore. I know how I am regarded."

"Yes, all this I have heard of you, and I wonder at your power over the class of men in the other room," said Smith.

"That is only a portion of my men. I have bands in Paris. I have other rendezvous in other places. It is all Le Noir, and yet but few have seen me. As to controlling these men," said Le Noir as his eye flashed, "I would as soon kill a score of the vermin as shoot a Uh-

lan. Bah! they fear me as the devil!" And he rose and walked the floor. Then he turned and said: "Stay with me, my American friend, and be my Lieutenant. You are an adventurer. You are in the army for adventure. If wealth is what you want, behold, we will buy and sell on the bourse in a few years and carry the banks of France."

A look of disgust crept over the face of Smith, and he said:

"I could never be a robber."

"But for a time," said Le Noir. "Then we will live in the salons of Paris. We will be king and queen on the thrones of the demi-monde."

"King and queen," said Smith, thoughtfully. "What do you mean?"

"What do I mean?" said Le Noir. "I mean this: I am a woman. I love the brave. You shall be my king. We will gather wealth and live in a blaze of happiness and excitement."

To say that Smith was astonished would be weak expression of a great sensation. He was a man, and his life had been much in camps. His morals were not perfect. He was only an average man of his time, with principles only strong enough to keep him from crime. Here was a dark-eyed little woman, with red cheeks and curling hair, standing in front of him, telling him she loved him for his courage, loved him for his manhood—the subtlest flattery woman can apply to the stronger sex. But asleep in another room of this nest of robbers was a true woman, gentle as a child, sweet and pure as the petals of flowers. A humid look came in his eye, and Le Loir mistook it for the melting of his heart toward her. She advanced with outstretched arms.

"Not yet," said Smith. "I am a soldier. My first duty is to my superior officer. I must return to Paris instantly and report, or shame will come upon my name. Where are my comrades?"

"All who lived fled back to the city. Without doubt you are reported dead. Remain here;" and with a blush, she again extended her arms.

"Duty first. I am a servant of France. Let me go and report, and I swear to you I will come again;" and he looked resolute. He thought for a moment. Should he plead for Aimée, for Sturgis? No; he knew something of woman's jealousy. "Your prisoners," said Smith, "what will you do with them?"

"I will hold them for ransom. They are the grist of my mill. I take from them my toll, and they pass on. Ah, Captain, it is a brave life. Come back to me and we will rule royally the rough men in our band. Stay; you can hear from me at any time by leaving in Paris a message at the 'Three Guardsmen,' near the Champ de Mars. You will remember it by the story of the great Dumas. See, I let you out of this door and you go out to the highway and then turn to the left. Follow the highway until you reach the videttes of the French army. Farewell!"

Looking back as he limped away he saw the boyish figure standing in the ruined doorway. All he held dear on earth was in the sombre old ruined abbey; but duty called him back to ruined, starving Paris.

When he reached the videttes of the army he was held as a prisoner until he showed his passport and demanded instant release and guidance to the General's headquarters. When he presented himself there he was taken into the presence of Trochu.

"Ah, then you were not killed, Captain?" said the General.

"Not quite. I only got another revolver bullet under my scalp; but it has opened an old wound, and I am badly hurt. I will report and then visit the hospital. The Germans are placing siege guns on the little hill near St. Marie le Brun. The Uhlans are at work between the lines. We met and defeated a squadron day before yesterday."

"I have heard of it. It was a brave action," said the General, kindly.

"You wish to know who mingles in your councils and then visits the German lines. This pass I took from a prisoner will show you. It was given by Crown Prince Frederick to the Marquis Larue." And Smith gave the passport to Trochu. He arose and paced the floor with a white, angry face.

"Ah," said he, "if I had him now, I would make an example of him on the Place de Grêve! Curse the white-haired old scoundrel! But, my brave comrade, what of the robberies? who is it terrifies the peasants and robs all the travellers?"

"You will be disappointed to know that it is all done by a beardless youth called Le Noir. The terror of his name is all the power he has. I was his prisoner last night. When peace comes his trade will be gone." And Smith blushed at his own subterfuge.

"God bless you, Captain. France cannot reward you. You are a brave man, and in happier days might be field-marshal, but France totters to her fall;" and a tear stood in the brave General's eye. "But, what ails you, my friend? You totter, you turn pale. Alas, do not fall!"

But our hero sank in one of his fits of vertigo, and laid prone on the floor. Wine was forced between his tightly closed lips, and water sprinkled on his face. In a few moments he sighed and looked around, but could not arise. He wrote with a pencil on a scrap of paper, which was brought to the office of the American Minister:

"I am afraid I am dying. I have found the copper letter N. I have found Aimée and think she is safe. I am going to the hospital.—NAPOLEON SMITH."

Was this to be the end of a series of adventures which I had never seen paralleled in any work of fiction? I read again and again the trembling characters on the scrap of

paper, and I am afraid I shed a few tears of regret over the sad ending of the strange life. I had come to love the great-hearted, simple American, and had grown proud of his rapid promotion and the honor which his courage shed on the name of Americans. Then I arose and sought the hospital.

CHAPTER X.

PROVOST : Come hither, sirrah ; Can you cut off a man's head ?

A MILITARY hospital. The savagery of the battle-field is mirrored in the hospital. To be sure the noise and shouts, the discordant shriek of bullets or scream of hurtling shell is not heard here. The rapid flight of the shrapnel or grape and cannister does not shred the air like the beating of wings, as we hear it overhead when we climb the earthworks, and the puff of cannon-smoke carries the murderous mass of lead and iron and packing of brimstone into the mass of sweating men. We miss here the angry curse and the panting shout of the charge and the repulse. But the groan, or the sharp shriek of pain, or the bubbling gasp of death we may hear here as on the battle-field. We have the blood and carnage here also ; but the blood drips from the operating table, where stand the collected talent and skill of the surgical profession, calmly drawing the knife across human nerves and muscles, and plying the slow saw athwart strong bones which are held in human hands as in a vise. The carnage is manifest here in the dropping of pallid arms. which shall never toil again, into waiting buckets smeared with blood ; limbs which are now sodden masses of flesh, and will never more carry a joyous heart to waiting homes, or move merrily in the mazes of the dance. Ah ! when ambition turns its eye upon a coveted throne, or the sneering lip gives anger to the insulted ambassador, it would be well if the instigator of war might first see the dull background to the picture of glory which his imagination paints, in the military hospital. There is speech here, too, but it is the raving of delirium. The captain waves an imaginary sword and calls his visionary

followers to the charge. Here a smooth-faced boy is talking with closed eyes, but he is talking of a mother he will never see again with those rolling eyeballs. Here another sings in a sephulchral tone, and reaches out a handless arm in getting to some friends he dreams of with a smile. The nurse tenderly replaces the mangled arm beneath the covering, and lays a cool bandage across the hot forehead, and he sleeps.

These nurses are men, too. They are soldiers with pallid cheeks, themselves but lately occupants of these same iron couches. Women may minister in other wards, but not here. This is the operating ward. It is a chamber of horrors, where Satan sees the perfect work of human sin and ambition. It is a hell, whose torments are earthly and in the suffering flesh. These surgeons are men with square, savage jaws and set teeth. No pity must stay or prolong the agony. They have iron hands gloved with velvet pity. To be strong is to be true, to be rapid is to be tender. Their ears must be deaf to every call only that of duty. Their hearts must be steel to everything but science. It is a workshop where man is sawed and cut and torn, but it is done to repair the ravages of war.

Down the long room are rows of iron cots. With their high bolsters they bring to view a row of white faces. The dark stubble of the beard shows plainly on the rigid features, and the youthful mustache on many droops over the tremulous lip with pathetic ghastliness. These occupants turn away their eyes from some of the cots, for they will not look where they know a rigid form is outlined beneath the white counterpane which will never move again. The groans are stilled there. They heard him last at sunrise, and he was praying in his delirium.

"I wish to see Napoleon Smith."

The steward takes down a book, runs his finger along a line and says :

"No. 168. In the operating ward. On the first floor above."

"Then the personality is lost, is it, and my brave American friend is already a number in a certain ward?"

"He is a friend, I presume," says the smiling surgeon-in-chief, as he leads the way to a numbered cot. "Ah, here he is. No. 168. Depression of the skull. Syncope is constant. I will examine him. American, too, is he? Napoleon Smith; yes, the General told me of him. A brave man." Thus busily talking, he reaches down and takes the hand which is roving over the pillow near the rolling head. That is all the motion apparent: the head rolling from side to side, the wandering right hand and the twitching, involuntarily, of the muscles.

"It is a bad case, my friend. Pulsation, spasmodic. Breathing stertorous. Temperature too low for the heart's action. Notice the similitude of paralysis in such a wound. And now that I examine, it is an old wound;" and the doctor is astonished.

"Yes," I say, "at Gettysburg, America."

"Indeed! Then he was there. But see, a recent wound has irritated and inflamed the old depression. It is a beautiful case. We shall operate instantly. You will remain and see it. It is nothing. The trephine will remove the depressed bone, and he will live, without doubt. Beautiful case. You *will* remain? Thanks." And he bustled away for the attendants and to prepare the table.

The use of the trephine in a military hospital was unusual, and the whole corps of surgeons was present to assist. Among them was an American who was finishing his medical education in Paris, and who chose to remain during the war and by actual experience learn what he could of surgery. "Dr. Mortlake, of Peoria, Illinois," I read on his card.

"These French surgeons beat the world," said Mortlake. "They will take a man to pieces, and if they do not lose any of the pieces they will put him together again; he will run and keep good time. That's the devil of it, though; they like to operate too well, and regard man too much in the light of a machine."

Poor Smith was strapped on the table and I held one uneasy hand while the scalp was opened and a thin circular trephine saw began to eat into his skull. I felt sick for a moment, but braced up and tried to forget the nauseating sound. Soon all bent over the table as the old chief surgeon lifted out the circular bone in triumph.

"See," said he, "the deposit on the under side of the bone formed a spicular needle which pierced the brain. Beautiful case!" and it was passed from hand to hand.

The old surgeon was in his element.

"Whenever the spicular bone irritated the brain there was syncope and paralysis; now that it is removed, the brain will be calm, the heart will resume its functions the nerves will be quiet. A few stitches in the scalp and our friend is a new man." And he rubbed his hands in glee.

"Doctor, may I retain this bone as a souvenir of your wonderful skill?" said Dr. Mortlake.

"Certainly," said the pleased old man. "You are welcome to it. Put the patient in his cot. Give some bromide and a little wine. See! he breathes easily and his eyes open."

It was so. When he was placed on his cot, the head remained quiet, the breathing became regular, and he fell asleep.

"When he awakes," said Dr. Mortlake, "he will be conscious, and in a few days he will be on his feet."

"I hope so," said I, with a sorrowful look.

"What is there important about the man?" said the Doctor.

"Much," said I, "that I cannot explain now. The hiding-place of a ward of mine, a beautiful French girl whom this man, Napoleon Smith, had recaptured after her abduction. Then he possesses a secret involving an immense treasure. I am in hopes, too, for his own sake, that this operation may prove a success. He is a brave man, a good soldier, and a compatriot of both of us. I propose to remain at his bedside, if you will remain with

me, and give him careful nursing and watch his return to consciousness."

"I am agreed," said Dr. Mortlake, "and I am confident that he will be all right in the morning, and in a day or two will be on his feet.

So we spent a night in the military hospital. At midnight Smith manifested a desire for food and drink, and his pulse assumed a natural tone, and his breathing was regular when he sank into sleep.

When the morning light crept into the windows, one by one the lights were extinguished, and that saddest hour in the twenty-four for the nurse in the hospital had arrived. The dead were here and there awaiting the coming of the attendants to carry them away to the dead-house. The thick air of the crowded room was hard to breathe, and the windows were raised to court the morning air.

A decided yawn was heard from 168, and the delighted Doctor sprang to the cot with a joyous cry. A yawn meant health, meant consciousness.

"Ah, Smith, how are you this morning?" said Mortlake.

Smith looked up with a dull stare.

"Here is your friend the Secretary. He has watched all night with you," the Doctor said again.

No answer.

The Doctor sprang away and returned with a night lamp turned up. He flashed it across Smith's dull eyes. "By George! look here, Secretary. Here is a queer case," said the Doctor, in a tone of suppressed excitement.

"What do you think of him, Doctor?" I said, in an anxious tone.

"Wait," said he, "until I call up the chief surgeon. I want him to see this;" and he hurried away.

"Smith," said I, "do you know me?"

A dull rolling of the eyes was the only response.

"Where is Aimée, Smith?"

Another yawn, and then a childish cry for food or drink. I turned cold and sat down in despair. I saw Dr. Mortlake and the chief approaching hurriedly, talking in a low tone. The old doctor stooped over and lifting the eyelid of one eye gazed long and carefully into it. Then he felt the pulse, laid his hand on his forehead and said:

"You are right. He is normal in health, but the brain has played us false."

"What do you mean?" said I.

"I mean," said the old man, sorrowfully, "that the patient is as healthy as either of us, and will be on his feet in a few days, but he is as dead to the past as if he were buried. Some defect in our treatment, which we cannot understand, has cut off the power of memory. He is a baby new-born. He must learn at the beginning and grow up to manhood again. It had been better if he had died. I saw one such case once before in the galleys, at Toulon. They led him by the hand like a child." And he gazed on the calm features of his patient.

"No cure for it?" I asked.

"Yes, the same cure which you use on the infant—education," said the old man with a sigh.

"And any secret which he knew, any help he could give—"

"Is entirely blotted out. Look at his eye."

"Is this your idea too, Dr. Mortlake?" said I in despair.

"Mine is worse. He is an imbecile. He will never know a familiar face on earth again."

Then I turned away and wept, and the patient again childishly cried for drink.

CHAPTER XI.

TIMON: Let me look back upon thee. O thou wall, that girdlest in those wolves!

"WE must communicate with our Government," said my chief, Mr. Washburne. "William of Prussia is crowned Emperor of United Germany at Versailles; closer and closer the Crown Prince draws his lines around Paris; France has become a Republic, and the Commune is tearing down and destroying this beautiful city. To be sure, the flag of the United States is respected, and we pass through the streets unharmed, whether France be Empire, Republic or a Commune. But we have been shut up here too long. We must receive orders from the Secretary of State and know what attitude to assume toward the new order of things."

"But how shall we escape from the city?" I asked. "Our last report went out by carrier pigeon, and the bullets of the Prussians failed to bring them down. It was a strange thing to see in the next *New York Tribune* we secured, a report which went out of Paris under the wing of a pigeon. Of course we know the sentiment of the Home Office, but, as you say, it would be pleasanter to see the Secretary in person and make a report after our long sequestration."

"Would you like to return to America?" asked Mr. Washburne.

"I will be outspoken." said I. "I would like to escape from Paris. The disappearance of the little French mademoiselle, Aimée, whom I had learned to love as if she were my own child, has made me very sad. She was left in my care, and the Lieutenant is dead and she is surrounded by enemies, or it may be is now dead. I am guilty of no negligence, and yet I feel depressed and

sorrowful over the circumstances. There is another matter which I have not confided to you, Mr. Washburne, which lies very heavy on my heart. Had you observed the tall American, with the Napoleonic features, who frequented this office?"

"Yes," said my chief, "I have often noticed him, and General Trochu a short time ago was commenting on his heroism, and lamenting that the sorry condition of French military affairs would not warrant his rapid promotion. His name was Napoleon Smith. That is a veritable American way of overloading a child with names. Well, what of him?"

"Mr. Washburne, that youth Smith was, I honestly believe, involved in one of the most romantic mysteries ever known in Europe—a mystery involving the history of France for the last half century, and involving the unearthing of hundreds of millions of francs. It would take too long to tell you the whole story, and now it has come to an abrupt end."

"How has it ended?" said Mr. Washburne.

"Napoleon Smith had an old wound he got at Gettysburg. In a reconnoissance last week he received another wound at the hands of a bandit, and came in to report to Trochu, after which he fell senseless and was borne to the hospital. While still conscious, he sent a scrap of paper to me, hinting that he knew the hiding-place of Aimée, and had also secured a thread which would lead to the unearthing of the treasure. Now, look at the strange *denouement*. At the hospital he was trephined and a portion of the skull removed. This saved his life but left him devoid of memory or judgment—an imbecile, in fact—and incapable of recalling a single incident of the past. How is that for a romance?"

"Strange indeed!" said my chief; "but is he hopeless?" "They have wonderful surgeons in Paris."

"It was the surgeon-in-chief at the hospital of the Bernardins who declared his case hopeless," said I.

"Well, well; I do not wonder that you feel sad. In regard to the mystery of the buried treasure, have you any papers or evidence you could use without the help of Smith?" asked Mr. Washburne.

"I have all Smith's papers, and some time will reveal to you the strange story in which I have been involved. At present I am heartsick, and having failed in all my attempts to discover my lovely ward, and Napoleon being a hopeless idiot, I wish to leave Paris. If you will devise any means to send me beyond the German lines, I will carry any message you wish to the Home Office.

Mr. Washburne walked the floor for a time in deep thought; at last he said:

"These imitative Frenchmen have made a new arm of the military service out of an idea and experiment which McLellan started on the Potomac. They have quite an efficient balloon corps, which takes observations from captive balloons, and in one case an adventurous aide-de-camp has entered Paris in a balloon. The expense would be small in fitting out a hydrogen balloon, and securing an experienced aeronaut. I really wish to get positive orders from the Secretary of State, and once outside you could communicate with him and then return to me. What do you think of the balloon project?"

"I am ready to undertake anything in my present mood," said I.

"Well, then, get your papers together in a compact form to be carried in your pocket. Pack only what clothing you can carry in a gripsack, and be ready for orders. I will visit President Favre and General Trochu and make arrangements for trying the experiment of escaping from Paris." And he left me.

I took out from my desk and secured about me the precious red morocco case of Napoleon Smith, and the reports I wished to transmit to America. Among the many articles I was to leave in my desk was a little instrument which my friend Thomas Edison had sent me as a curiosity. It was his first model of the phonograph. The world

had not yet heard of its wonderful powers, and I had shown it to only a few scientific friends in Paris. I felt sad as I looked upon it, for it was the last toy with which Aimée had played ere she was stolen away. Placing it in position, I set it in motion, and a bar of her favorite song rolled out "Le Sabre de mon Père." A tear stood for a moment and then rolled down from my eye, and I wiped it sadly away. Yes, I would leave Paris. New scenes will drive away old griefs. The *concierge* throws the door open :

"Monsieur, the Marquis Larue."

Of all the hateful names to me at that moment, the most hateful one sounded in my ears. I shut my hands hard together and thought, if he was not a white-haired old man, I would like to take him by his weazened throat and shake the scant life out of his hypocritical body. As it was, I never rose to greet him, but as he came in I glared upon him in anger. He smiled with his thin lips and beautiful false teeth, and ventured the remark that he hoped Monsieur was well. I motioned him to a seat and made no answer.

"I called," said he, obsequiously, "to visit my niece, Mademoiselle Aimée. I trust she is well."

"You lie!" said I fiercely. "You know as well as I do that she has not been here for several days."

"Ah, Monsieur makes me sad. Is she dead, or has Monsieur sent her away ?" and he shrugged his shoulders.

"She has been stolen away, as she walked in the street for air. She went out and disappeared, and I think *you* know more of her whereabouts than I do," said I.

"No, indeed ! I come to visit my beloved niece, and you tell me she has disappeared." And he took out his faultless cambric handkerchief and wiped his eyes. "She is dead, then. Ah, this cruel Paris ! This awful Commune ! She was destroyed, and will never be seen again."

Absent-mindedly I was playing with the handle of the phonograph and studying the fine acting of the old

scoundrel, and without thinking of the effect, I gave a turn on the handle. The tiny voice, clear as a bell, trilled out, "It is, it is the sabre of my father!"

With a shriek, the old Marquis sprang to his feet and approached me. His hands were working and his features convulsed.

"Are you the devil?" he asked.

"I am devil enough to tell you, Marquis, that I know you are a murderer in your heart. You and your son wish to get Aimée out of the way so that the rich estates you know she is entitled to will fall into your hands. But I tell you beware. God will bring you to account for every tear you make that sweet girl shed. Go! I know you, and I tell you that others know you, and your career is a short one. I spare you because you are an old man, do not tempt me too far!"

Cringing, like the old traitor he was, he passed out. This episode, so accidental, put a great doubt in my mind. Was Aimée dead, that he showed such guilt? I was very sad.

"Are you all ready?" said my chief, entering at this moment. "I can send you away immediately. You will have no one with you but the aeronaut, as a military escort or a military order in your possession would render you amenable to military law as a spy. But if you are captured alone you will be protected by the United States as a non-combatant. You will be sent up from the rear of the cadet's quarters on the Champ de Mars, so as to avoid cannon-shots from the Germans. This sealed packet, addressed to the President, is all I wish you to carry for me."

"I am as ready as I ever will be, and can depart instantly. My dear sir, I have only one request to make. If you hear of Aimée, care for her as you would for a child of my own if I had one. If you can assist my poor imbecile friend Smith, do so, and I will be forever grateful. Adieu! You will read of my ascent in the evening paper."

"Farewell, Secretary," said Mr. Washburne. "You are a brave man and good-hearted! and I trust we shall meet again after these troublous times are over. As to your *protégés*, Aimée and Smith, I will do all for them I can. Depend on me for that. Good-bye!" and he extended his hand. I loved him and honored him, as did all who knew him, and I hurried away afraid I should reveal my emotion in tears.

I found the little varnished muslin hydrogen balloon tugging away at its cords, and the acid tank empty. The aeronaut was a wiry little Frenchman, who stepped into the car as readily as if he were entering a cabriolet. I followed, and then the cords were severed, and I experienced for the first time that feeling of standing still and the earth falling rapidly away from me, while the view expanded until all Paris was lying beneath me—the crooked Seine, the long boulevards, the great roof of Notre Dame, the red earthworks; and then an eastern current took us swiftly over the works of the Germans. I see a white puff of smoke, and after seemingly a long time, a solid shot passes under us with a spiteful woof of sound.

"They never make anything at that," said my aeronaut.

Some unlucky German lieutenant of artillery who did not understand the science of gunnery well, undertook to elevate the muzzle of a cannon high enough to reach us, and when the lanyard was pulled, the inevitable result followed, by the bursting of the piece, as we could see in the scattering of the crowd and the gathering up of the wounded.

"My German friend has taken a severe lesson in gunnery," said the composed aeronaut, as he leaned over the basket. "We have not struck the right current to carry us to Claremont," said my aeronaut, "and we will throw out sand and rise higher."

We darted higher into the air, but still we floated toward Fontainebleau, away from safety.

"It is strange," said he. "I never knew the currents at this height to blow to the south. Throw out more

sand." So said so done; but still we passed German camps and steadily moved south. He stood for a time with a white face and troubled look, and allowed the balloon to rise until the scenery of earth became blurred, and we shivered with cold.

"I have another expedient," said he. "We will go down until we strike another current. It must be somewhere."

With a convulsive jerk he opened the valve, and again we descended, and the world began to enlarge upon the view. The villages rolled beneath us rapidly, but we were still going south. With a shake upon the cord he sought to shut the valve. It would not respond, and objects became larger and distinct below us.

"What is the matter?" said I.

"The spring of the valve is broken," said he, as his teeth chattered with fear. He looked up as though he would climb the shining cords and replace the valve with his hands. Then he shouted: "Throw out all the ballast!"

Over the side it went; but still the earth arose with speed, as though it would come up and strike us. We heard a fluttering sound, and looked up. The muslin of the great globe was collapsing, and the lower end, through which the hydrogen was introduced, was swinging idly against the ropes, empty and wrinkled.

"Throw out the valise! Throw away the anchor and ropes!"

We go slower and slower now, but the aeronaut looks at me as if to measure my strength, and fixes his teeth in his upper lip until it bleeds.

"Does Monsieur pray?" asked the trembling aeronaut.

"Sometimes, when it is necessary. Not now. I have seen in America a catastrophe like this. Have you a knife?" I asked.

"Yes Monsieur."

"Then cut one cord on that side and one opposite, and tie them together," I said. He was cool now, and tied the severed cords tightly together.

"Now, cut two more on opposite sides and tie them," I said.

"Ah, Monsieur, I see now!" And rapidly he secured the cords until we climbed into the network and sat safely, while with his knife he severed the last cords, and the heavy basket fell to the ground.

"It is what you call the Yankee trick, is it not, Monsieur?" said the now grinning aeronaut.

We now descended slowly, like a parachute, wafted first one way and then another, but steadily descending. We brushed the dead tops of the trees and went over a thin line of forest, and on the other side saw a large chateau and a village. They saw us coming, and as we struck the village street, a crowd gathered around us. A dozen pulled down the mass of muslin, and a dozen more seized me as I ploughed along in the mud. The aeronaut leaped to the ground before we struck, and had already pulled out a cheroot and was asking for a match.

As I brushed the dirt from my clothing, and felt to see if my watch and papers were intact, I felt a heavy hand laid on my shoulder and a voice vociferated loudly in my ear:

"Say, Cap, if you are professionals I will give you a big stake the next ascension you make. Take up a thousand of these ere leetle yaller dodgers, and chuck 'em out as you float over villages, and let 'em waft down on the breezes as it were. I'll give you four dollars a thousand, and all yew got to dew is to chuck 'em out. This will encourage science and elevate the taste, while it introduces a really valuable soap. As Webster said, 'Let me make a nation's soap and I don't care who writes their songs.' Save the wrappers on every cake till yew git twenty-five, and it entitles yew to a large steel engraving of Richard the Third signing the death-warrant of Mary Queen of Scots in fourteen colors; that is, the engraving is in fourteen colors, not Mary. Well—blame my skin! is that you, Mr. Secretary? Where on earth did yew come from?" And Nehemiah Sturgis put his arms

around my neck. His American twang was music to my ears, and I said:

"I was trying to get through the lines to return to the United States, and here I am. What village is this?"

"Brinvilliers, they call it."

"Ah, indeed; and what chateau is that over there, and who lives there?"

"That is the Chateau Brinvilliers, and just now it is run by the Marquis Larue and his interesting son," said Sturgis with a scowl.

"Well, there seems to be a Providence in this, and perhaps I had better not leave France after all. How long have you been here, and how did you come here anyway?" I asked.

"That is a long story, Secretary; but, land, we can't talk here. See what is coming!" I looked around and saw a squad of German soldiers approaching, I hurriedly shook the hand of Sturgis, and said:

"You will hear from me again. They can only send me back to Paris. Keep an eye on the old Marquis and his son, and I trust soon to tell you more."

Sturgis pushed his way through the crowd to the officer commanding the troops, and tried to put a yellow dodger and a sample cake of soap in his hand. The soldiers and the crowd laughed uproariously as he fell back, and my aeronaut and myself were led away to the tent of a commanding officer.

As I entered the tent of the German Colonel, I felt instinctively the cause of Prussian success. Every soldier moved like clockwork. Every officer seemed a cold, calm machine. The Prussians seemed only an instrument in the hands of Bismarck, to accomplish a desired result. No thought or reason seemed manifest anywhere. These men simply obeyed. The subordinate officer told his superior of our *fiasco*, and the landing of the balloon. He then asked me my business, and I told him. I also took out and showed him my despatches to the President. He made no answer, but turned in his chair to a table or

which stood a telegraphic instrument, and drummed away for an instant with an alphabet I did not understand, for I am myself an expert operator; and then he waited and left me standing. Soon the clicking instrument made answer, and he wrote out the message in an order-book. Then he turned to me and said, in a respectful tone:

"The Prince orders that you be not searched or incommoded in any way, but you and your companion be sent back instantly to Paris. You will be turned over to the nearest videttes of the French under a flag of truce."

Such was the ending of my attempt to leave Paris, and when I walked into the office of the American Ministry next morning, and was greeted with a laugh from my kind and genial chief, I felt more than ever sick of the horrible, starving, and nearly destroyed city. "No matter," said Mr. Washburne, "the end is coming soon, and then we will have some adventures to tell of, and some scenes to recount, which we would not have had had we not lingered in Paris during the siege. Have a cigar and forget your disappointment."

CHAPTER XII.

OTHELLO ; She loved me for the dangers I had passed ;
And I loved her that she did pity them.

"YOU are neglecting your patient at the hospital," said Dr. Mortlake, when I met him next morning on the street. "If you are curious in psychological matters, he is a good subject of study. His whole past is absolutely blotted out, and he has found a friend in a little French woman who visits him every day and ministers to him. Why not go with me and see him? I shall keep him in my ward as long as I am in the hospital, and shall care for him and watch his case."

"Who is the little French woman?" I asked.

"I do not know. She will give no name. Attends to her own business, and does well as a nurse; so I say nothing. It is the most touching scene you ever cast eyes on, to see her nursing Smith like a great baby. She talks English or French, and is trying to teach Smith how to talk. She must be some old flame Smith knew in some previous experience. Say, that is woman all over ; give her something to pity and coddle, and she will love it to death. A man wants to be proud of his wife or sweetheart, but just touch his pride and make him ashamed of the loved object, and, presto! love flies out of the window." And the Doctor snapped his fingers in derision.

"I never heard him say anything of any lady acquaintances, and do not think he had many. In fact, Smith was no lady's man, though he was handsome and might have been," said I.

"Well, come down and see the little touching drama, and I have something I wish to propose to you about this case. You are Smith's nearest friend, and I want your consent to an experiment. But I will speak of this

later." And we said no more until we reached the hospital.

When we reached the ward where Smith was now installed, the Doctor made a motion with his hand for me to be silent as we passed in.

Napoleon Smith appeared as hearty and strong as ever, and sat in a large easy-chair, and held in his hands some highly ornamental blocks of wood containing the alphabet. A childish smile was on his face, and he was playing with the blocks as an infant might. In another chair in front of him sat a plainly dressed woman, and I never saw such a look of love and idolatry on a woman's face as I saw on hers. She was bending forward and calling the names of the letters, and trying to induce Smith to repeat them. It was the strangest sight I ever saw, and there was something horrible in it. I knew Smith to be a man of powerful intellect, so that now the pitiful sight of his imbecility was a hundredfold worse to look upon than death. Have you ever noticed the dawning of love on a baby's face? The crooning prattle and the stretching out of the hands towards the loved object? In a baby it is beautiful, but in a grown man like Smith, it was something too sad to look upon. As we came forward the woman drew back with a deep blush upon her cheek.

"Ah, Doctor," she said in French, "my baby is learning to talk. He knows his name, and laughs when he hears my step, and when I sing he claps his hands."

"Did Madame know the Captain before he came here?" I asked.

"I had seen him," she modestly answered.

"The Captain," said I, "was my friend, and I did not know he had any other near friends who would be so kind to him in his trouble. I thank you for your kindness."

"It is nothing. I know once he was brave and strong, and could do brave deeds, and when I found him like this I was willing for sweet charity to nurse him back to health and reason. Do you know," said she, eagerly, "the Doc-

tor says he will never know of his past. He will never recall his youth or his history, but will grow up like a child again. In a few years he will grow up to a second manhood. He will learn a new life and begin a new career. Is it not strange?"

"It is very strange, and very pitiful too," I said.

"Do you think so?" said she, with a sparkling eye. "He will make new friends. He will learn to love others whom he never knew in his old life!" And it struck me that this strange woman was founding a hope on this.

"See! already;" and she clapped her hands and called, "Napoleon, my brave!" and a smile lit up his face, and he clapped his hand in response.

"Why is it sad?" said she again; "there may be scenes in his life he might better never recall. In his new life he will find new friends, who would die for him," and a tear stood in her eye.

"Ah, Madame," said I, "but think of the wasted years of his past life!"

"Yes," said she, fiercely, as she stood and stroked the dark hair of Smith, "and may there not be wasted years in other lives? May God not give new opportunities to others to begin new lives as well as to my baby?" And she stooped down and kissed his forehead, and he seized and held her hand.

"Madame," said I, "I know not why you should thus sacrifice your time to my poor friend, and—excuse me—I know not by what right you exercise this care over him."

"Ah," said she scornfully, "Monsieur, it may be, will take him home and nurse him back to reason, or maybe he will find a mother or a sister to care for the great handsome baby. Is it so?"

I could not answer. Who would be as kind to him as this passionate girl? Where would he go when he left the hospital? Certainly no one could do more for him than she was doing. It was a strange case, and I turned away saying:

"Pardon me, Madame, or Mademoiselle—I know not how to call you—"

"It makes no difference," said she with a blush.

"I was about to ask your forgiveness for my apparent over-carefulness, but I tell you again, I know his history and am his nearest friend."

"His history is gone!" said she, in a tone of triumph.

"Alas!" said I, "too true!"

"Why do you sigh when you speak of this change, this loss of memory?" said this strange nurse. "Because you say he has lost his education, his reason? But how many with rich endowment of reason make a wreck of life and end at the suicide's grave? Education, you say. Well, go down among the *demi-monde,* and do you find only the ignorant and the base? Has education kept the soul pure, or can it bleach away a stain? What has love or reason or education done to stay the tide of sin? Ah, messieurs, many and many a man has prayed to God for an opportunity to do what my baby here will do by force of a bullet—forget the past and begin a new life, free from memory and free from prejudice. Perhaps I would rather win his love and go hand-in-hand with him, and both of us learn the new life in a new world."

I believe I began then to see the drift of her argument. I did not know this woman, and I only remarked her beauty and intelligence; but I could see that in some way their past had run together, and this volcanic woman was basing a hope of Smith's love on his forgetfulness of the past.

"Well," thought I, if Aimée is alive and could see this wreck of a man, this drivelling infant, would she still love him?"

"Doubtful," Dr. Mortlake broke in on my musing with his resonant, practical tone.

"It was to speak of something else I brought you here. I have a theory I wish to speak about. First, though, I would ask—did Smith ever have trouble with his head before this last wound?"

"Yes," said I, "often. He fainted in my office once. He was subject to vertigo, resembling apoplexy. Even in health he always carried his head on one side, ever since the wound was received at Gettysburg,"

"Good! I am glad to hear it," said the Doctor. "But you never remarked a loss of memory after these attacks?"

"Never; he had a wonderful memory," I answered.

"Then the conclusion is simple and apparent. The operation of the trephine destroyed a faculty of the brain," and the Doctor rubbed his hands with satisfaction.

"Well, I had never thought of that, but, now I think of it, you are right," said I.

"Here is my theory," said the Doctor, and he took from his pocket a little box, and in it, packed in cotton, a circular piece of bone. "Here is the bone removed from Smith's head. On this under side you remark this spicular bone about one-sixteenth of an inch long. Well, if we could have removed this spicule without trephining we could have effected a cure without injury to a faculty of the brain. We could not do this, so the bone was removed, and a result followed which might not occur again in a hundred cases. I see it now, but it could not be avoided."

"And that was——" said I.

"And that result was, the inflamed brain-matter, when it had room made by the trephine, forced itself up to fill the circular space, and the pressure paralyzed a convolution of the most sensitive portion of the brain," said the Doctor.

"I see," said I; "and the cure is impossible?"

"And the cure *is* possible. I have got to be quite a Frenchman in surgery, and I begin to love difficult cases. Now," said the Doctor, "I will make a startling proposition. I propose to reopen that wound, remove the spicule from that bone, and then replace it in Smith's head. No power can so nicely adjust any material as to thickness as this same bone will do. I will replace the material

lost by the cutting of the saw, and sew the scalp over that bone, and when the pressure is equalized, I really believe Napoleon Smith will take up his life where he laid it down a few weeks ago, and be not only a well man, but also be in full possession of his faculties. Ah, 'We are fearfully and wonderfully made!' and no writer in physiology or science has got beyond that expression of the Psalmist.

While the Doctor explained his project, I watched the beautiful nurse, who sat and held the hand of our hero. As he went on she grew pale, and panted as if she had been running. Then she bent down and kissed the smiling patient. Then a look of fierce anger swept over her face, and she said :

"Why not let him alone? Must you cut and torture him again? I will care for him, and take him away where you will never see him again. He will love me and be my child."

I think the Doctor understood what was passing in her mind, for he smiled and said :

"That is like woman's love. You would keep him a weakling and a child, if only he would love you. Yes, you would rather nurse and care for him, however weak, that to see him again on his way to glory—spiking the guns again in front of Mont Rouge ; again pouring death into the ranks of the Uhlans, and standing before Trochu to receive the epaulets of a captain. Is that woman's love? Then I want none."

She arose and approached the Doctor, cat-like, with gleaming eyes, and her hand fumbling in the folds of her dress for a knife. The Doctor only stood and smiled. She stopped and looked at him a moment, and then laughed and cried together. Then she said :

"You think he will hate again what he hated, and love again what he loved. Is it so?"

The Doctor nodded his head in acquiescence.

"And you say for this I would see him a baby. He, my brave captain. No; if he spurned me away with

his foot, if he cast me out with curses, and bruised the hand that has bound up his wounds, still the love of a French woman would say: "Doctor, make him a man again, set his feet again in the paths of glory, and again I will sit and worship the star which does not see its worshipper;" and she went up to Smith and laid her blushing cheek on his shoulder.

"Go and leave us now," said she, "and when the terrible ordeal comes I will sit and hold his hand. When memory comes back my face will be the first he shall see. A kind God will give the wicked a chance for happiness and a new life;" and we heard her weep as we passed out.

"A French woman," said the Doctor, in a meditative tone, "is in her love like lightning—it never strikes but once in a place. It don't have to—once does the business;" and he whistled as we walked down the street.

"Yes, Doctor," said I; "and yet I found much to admire in her argument. It is the old question in a new form: 'Is life worth living?' That little woman without a history would die for the privilege of caring for the object of her love, but the failure of her plan restores a good man to society. Good-night, Doctor," and we parted.

CHAPTER XIII.

TRANIO : Nay, then, 'tis time to stir him from his trance.
I pray, awake, sir : If you love the maid,
Bend thoughts and wits to achieve her.

" IT is a strange phenomenon that you describe, and one that involves issues almost eternal in their results," said my chief, Mr. Washburne, as I finished the recital of the strange case of Napoleon Smith.

" I do not think I get your meaning," said I:

" You are merely looking at the apparent results of the mishap. You have only regarded these phenomena as they affect your friend Smith, but his is only one case in a hundred, and you know the cause. The same phenomena occur with no apparent cause, and we call it aberration of mind, insanity, softening of the brain or some other fanciful name, without seeking the cause. D——, the great *restaurateur* of New York city, in full health, disappears from society. He is gone for weeks and months. At last, in the rural districts of New Jersey, he is found in a forest, frozen to death. Detectives follow his wanderings, and find that he has been acting in a perfectly sane manner during his wanderings, but absolutely living in another world. He did not know his own name in that last state of existence, yet he drew checks and handled money in his own identity as if perfectly sane. All his actions were logically sane in connection with his dual existence. He bought railroad tickets, he stopped at hotels, and he was courteous to servants and all whom he conversed with. No one suspected insanity, and there was no insanity, His past was blotted out, and he was slowly forming a new experience around his new identity. When found, his hands were carefully covered with faultless gloves and his attire was that of a gen-

tleman. His death in the forest was no evidence of insanity, for his wanderings there may have been in consonance with his new experience. As he struggled to adjust himself to his new identity, he was frozen and died. Then, this experience calls up to memory that of my friend, Rev.——, of New York. He preached eloquently on Sunday, and on Monday he packed his valise carefully and boarded a New York Central train and went West. He smiled kindly when spoken to when last seen in the streets and at the Central depot. Then he was not seen or heard from in a year. No scandal followed his disappearance, for he had no monetary transactions left unsettled. His family relations were very pleasant, and his wife worshipped him, and never suspected his fidelity. At the end of a year he was found in New Orleans. Spoken to, and his name uttered, he did not respond. His family were informed of his whereabouts, and detectives were placed on his track. His life, followed back for a year, revealed no evidence of insanity. He had preached and travelled under a new name. He had sold securities and changed money at banks. He was well-dressed, eloquent, and a perfect gentleman during the whole time, and yet his past was blotted out, and he was struggling to build up by experience a new identity. When, as by a shock, he took up the old life in New York city, the life he had lived in the South was entirely forgotten. This shows us the power man has to live a dual life, to adapt himself to his new surroundings, as if possessed of two souls, two spirits, two memories. A yet stranger evidence of the faculties of the brain being held in abeyance for a time, is that of my friend S——, of Utica, N. Y. He went to New York city to transact business. He disappeared. The police traced his history while in New York. He had left his business entirely arranged at the bank. His name appeared on a hotel register. His name was also on the register of an ocean steamer company. The police of Liverpool were cabled. No such person was on such a steamer. The steamer stopped at the Bermudas.

No such person by name stopped there. A person answering the description, but of another name, had stopped there. Was entirely sane. Had walked and rode over the islands. Had sailed for New York. When he returned to Utica no one could make him believe he had been on an ocean voyage, or had ever been out of sight of land. He was a Christian gentlemen, and did not drink. For a time his memory was gone, and while in that condition a new memory and reason controlled the new life. Now, when I spoke of this phenomenon involving eternal issues, I allude to this psychological problem: What memory will accompany us in eternity? The pressure of a drop of blood on a certain spot in the brain obstructs memory. In these cases a physical operation could not remove the pressure. During the temporary obstruction of the old memory, a new memory is formed. Gradually a new life and life-theory grows out of the new experience. It is really a new life. Well, is it not possible that we are all of us, by causes we do not understand, led into new experiences and new lives, and that a drop of blood, a rap on the head, a fall from a carriage, creates a Bonaparte out of a *sous* lieutenant, an emperor out of a sturdy Dutch prince, a murderer out of a Robespierre? Take a step farther, and outside of our own volitions toward good or bad, and for how much will we be responsible in eternity?"

"Ah," said I, "Mr. Washburne, we are getting Frenchy in our reasonings. Responsibility will be always commensurate with reason and choice."

"That is good, practical American theory," said my chief; "but take this Smith case, now. In his new experience he is clinging to this little French nurse. He has no past, and he asks no questions as to her past. He will learn to love her. She will worship him. Now Dr. Mortlake replaces the functions of the brain, and Smith, we will say, forgets the experience of the last few weeks and takes up life where he laid it down, in General Trochu's office. Will he go back to the worship of

Aimée and purity, or will some lingering memory bind him to his beautiful nurse? And in either case, who will be responsible for the sin and misery which may follow?"

"Ha, ha!" said I; "you are too metaphysical for me. I only look at the present duty, and that is to restore a strong man to society, and then let events follow as they will. Will you come down and see the operation? The Doctor would like your official endorsement in case of accident, as Smith is an American."

"Yes," said Mr. Washburne, "I will go down with you now."

When we arrived at the hospital, I noticed that Mr. Washburne was deeply touched at the scene of love and compassion presented there. As you have seen the mother linger about the sailor lad who is to sail on the morrow for a distant port, and gaze upon him as if she would feast her eyes to satiety, or with tender hands laid on his head, or her face placed against his in motherly affection, so the little dark nurse clung to Smith. She had combed his curling chestnut locks, and waxed his mustache, and he sat and smiled upon her with infantile love. He would reach out his once powerful hand and hold the skirt of her robe in his hand.

"See, messieurs," said she, "my baby is ready to receive company. He is a good boy, and I will soon take him out on the streets. Is it so, *mon brave?*"

And Smith showed his white teeth in a smile so childlike, that the eye grew humid in spite of our shame.

"If messieurs would leave him to me I would take him away and care for him, and the cruel operation would be useless. See, he will soon be a man again. He does not care for the past. He will be happy in the present, then. Let it be so, please," she said.

"We will administer ether, that no possible struggle may prevent the most careful adjustment of the bone," said Dr. Mc[illegible]lake. "It is a simple operation, but must be carefully performed. I must press the bone down ex-

actly to its old position; a grain lower will cause syncope, and not low enough will not effect a cure. We will perform the operation as he sits here in his chair. The pressure on the brain will be less. Mademoiselle will let his head rest on her bosom—so; that is right. Now the handkerchief. Now he sleeps," With a deft hand he opened the scalp and pressed the protruding brain slowly back with his fingers. Only an uneasy start was perceptible. Said the Doctor:

"Notice here a hard rubber band to take the place of the bone wasted by the scarf of the saw! Notice, I press it down until I see the edges evenly joined, and then I place over all a solid plate of gold, so that the bone will remain in place. Then I take these stitches and leave this opening for suppuration. Then over all a solid compress, to be kept wet with cold water, and we are done. Now we will wait for the effects of the ether to pass off, and see how our patient appears."

With what different emotions we watched the waxen features reposing on the nurse's shoulder! Dr. Mortlake, without doubt, had sunk the man in the surgeon. All his genius and talent, and all his finer instincts, were subordinate to his love of science and surgery. The pulse to him was the hand of the clock, showing how fast or slow the human machine was marking time. The heart was only the engine of life, and to supply it with vitality for motive-power was all the study. He cared little for emotions of the heart, which quicken its action or thrill along the pulses. My chief sat apart and watched the little drama as a great statesman would—just to see the different emotions brought into play. I myself had an unspoken love for the brave American, Napoleon Smith, and in addition to my love of science and love of the curious in physiology, I loved the patient—the man.

Who could read the emotions on the mobile face of the nurse? Was she praying that the experiment might be a failure, and her noble but infantile patient be left to her care? Possibly. Or was she praying that if he came

back instantly to memory and manhood he might, finding her his devoted nurse and friend, still cling to her in his strength as he had in his weakness? Who can read the human heart? We only saw that as the red came back into his cheek it left hers, as if transferred by the very power of love. As his breathing became long and regular, hers became hurried and difficult. When he became uneasy and struggled to come out of the nightmare of etherization, she loosened her hold upon him, as if apprehending his flight from her loving grasp, or from fear lest her too strong restraint might be presumptuous.

"He is about to wake; open the window and give him air," said the Doctor.

His eyes are open. All lean forward to see if intelligence be in their depths. Ah! he is about to speak. Let his first word be oracular and determinate of his future.

"Aimée."

An ashy pallor overspreads the nurse's face, and she would withdraw her arm, but it is under his head.

"He is all right," said Dr. Mortlake, pushing a glass of wine up to his lips.

"The operation is a success," said Mr. Washburne.

"Gentlemen, let me go," said the nurse, in a hollow tone.

As Napoleon Smith heard the voice he turned his head until he stared in the face of the nurse. A look of horror crept over his face, and she cowered visibly before it.

"Le Noir, where is Aimée now?" said Smith.

"Messieurs, for the love of God, let me go!" and she tried to disengage her arm.

"Do not let her go," said Smith, "until she tells me where Aimée is. Ah, you devil!" said he, attempting to rise and lay hold upon her, "tell me, or I will choke it out of you."

"See, messieurs," said the nurse, in a fierce tone, "I am a devil now—I that have held his head and nursed him for weeks! This is your work of science. You could

not leave the providence of Heaven alone! Oh, Napoleon *mon brave, mon brave!*" and she wept like a child.

"Is it true what she says?" asked Smith. "Has she cared for me during my fainting fit?"

"Your fainting fit has lasted you just about a month," said Dr. Mortlake, drily.

"A month! And where has Aimée been all this time? Who has cared for her?" said the excited man.

"This will not do, gentlemen; our patient will be driven to insanity now. As soon as he resumes the use of his memory he commences to rave over the past. You must be quiet, Smith. In order to pursue the object of your love you must become well. First secure health, then you can work," and the Doctor prepared a sleeping potion.

"True, Doctor, but Le Noir here can tell me what I wish to know, and then I will rest," said Smith.

"Your thoughts are all of the little baby-faced girl Aimée, are they?" and the French woman folded her arms and looked down at her late patient. "You do not recall the love of the past weeks, or the long nights o watching. You held my hand, and I was your only friend. Is it so, *mon brave?*" and she looked down at him with her pleading eyes and her nostrils working with the intensity of her emotion.

"Le Noir," said Smith calmly, "if you have cared for me as you say, I am grateful. I know nothing of these weeks since the sortie of the 20th and my reconnoissance. If you have followed me in a mistaken hope that we might be more than friends, I am sorry for that too. I have no room in my heart for another love, even if your past would warrant it. Forgive me if I appear rude in thus plainly speaking, but I am only a rude American soldier, and speak directly from the heart; and Le Noir—"

"Le Noir?" said Mr. Washburne. "Is not that a famous name? Where have I heard it?"

"I will tell you where you heard it," said the French nurse, fiercely. "You heard it in the café, and in the barracks, and in the salon. You heard it from pale lips of cowards, and from the braggart tongues of the police. You heard of Le Noir as the cruel bandit chief, and the leader of desperadoes of the faubourg and of the highway, and yet, you have seen that Le Noir in the hospital, nursing an American soldier back to life. You have seen her love spurned and her last chance to leave a life of crime wrenched away from her, by the skill of the surgeon, and you will hear of her again. This Le Noir means the black—these eyes, this hair, and this black heart within this bosom! Yes, you will hear of Le Noir again, and you will know that she had at one time a woman's heart in her bosom. Napoleon, take care of the little doll you worship—a French woman's love, once spurned, turns to hate. Watch her closely, then, for Le Noir will always be near your path," and, white with anger, she passed through the door.

"Should we allow her to escape?" said the Doctor.

"For shame!" said Smith; "the love of such a woman would be a compliment to a king. Let her go, and wreak her vengeance if she can. I trust I may soon be on my feet to assist in the warding off of danger to Mademoiselle Aimée. Gentlemen, I thank you for your kindness; I am strangely sleepy; farewell—" and his head fell back on the cushions, and he was sound asleep.

Thus we left him. It was one of the most terrible scenes through which I ever passed, and I was not astonished when Mr. Washburne placed his arm in mine and said:

"Whenever this complicated affair is concluded, let me know. I have a strange compassion for the wayward French woman, and a deep interest in your patient, Napoleon Smith. Be sure and keep me informed of the *dénouement.*"

CHAPTER XIV.

SHYLOCK: How, now, Tubal; what news from Genoa? Hast thou found my daughter?

"YES, but who can tell what condition the higher classes will assume under a Republican form of government? Will it be Citizen Larue now instead of Marquis? Bah! shall we have again the greasy hands of the butcher and the hard hand of the carpenter to hold the helm of the ship of state? Will the wooden shoes of the *canaille* ring on the pavement or grind the carpets of palaces? Ah! what do I say? Has not the Commune already battered down the walls of the Tuileries, and as they pulled down the statues of Louis XVI., so now the Imperial N. and the Column Vendôme grind under their heels. Ah, Victorien, if you had the spirit of your father, we would together put our shoulders under the fortunes of the Orleanists and lift them again to a throne; and then, Victorien, we would again stand in the courts of kings, and ride over these dirty men of the cap and apron. But the spirit of the old régime is dead!" and the old Marquis spread his hands in deprecation and glared angrily at his son.

"Fortunately it is dead, or we would hear again the creak of the pulleys in the guillotine; heads would fall in baskets of straw, and the Place de Grêve would have a daily *féte* for the mobs of the faubourg, and the women of the cabarets and cafés would knit again in the courts, while justice, with a ready hand, was unravelling the work of centuries of nobility. Yes, papa, you are right —the spirit of the aristocracy is dead, or our friends with the red caps and flags would have new work in taking its life;" and the hopeful son puffed angrily at his cigarette.

"Was it left for my old age to behold my son turning a Republican?" said the old Marquis, in a trembling voice.

"Republican? No; curse the Republicans, and curse the Commune, and also, if you wish, curse the Empire. Down with them all! my venerated papa. But what shall we gain then? The paint is hardly dry on the panel of the carriage where we put our golden crest before we have a president. Presto! we scratch it off to the music of the massacre of the boulevards, and then we tremblingly paint the crest anew and we have an Emperor! Citizen, as a title, gives way again to Duke and Marquis and Count. Hey! be careful and rub off the crest again, for the Emperor is flown and another President rules, and Citizen is in fashion again. Faith, we are busy in France to tell aright from day to day, what *is* our true title. I am tired of it, my amiable parent, and I will take no chances in this lottery of the gods;" and the young scion of the house of Larue lit a fresh cigarette and lay back on the fauteuil.

The Marquis looked at him in scorn, and a tear stood in his eye as he answered:

"It is for this that I have schemed for two or three generations. It is for this I won the heart of Louis and drove out the last scion of the house of Brinvilliers and Beauharnais. For this I saw her die in poverty and her daughter a beggar in Paris, and married to a lieutenant of the Infantry. For what? That my son might be a noble and lord it over the wide fields of the Brinvillier's estate; and now when I am old, he hesitates to carry out my wishes and let me die in peace. It is the curse of the last days of France that they give birth to no noble sons with the courage of the aristocracy which once followed the white plumes of Navarre, or the golden lilies of France at Cressy. Heavens! the *canaille* have courage enough, God knows!"

Victorien Larue was a good type of the Frenchman of Paris in 1871. There is no sight so sad to the lover of

his country as the slow but sure deterioration of the race to which he belongs. We may attribute the defeat of the French in the last great struggle to a hundred causes, and many of them, without doubt, contributed to the general result; but when the student of social problems carefully compares fact with fact, he will sadly admit that a half-century of luxury and licentiousness found its overripe fruit at Sedan, Metz and Paris. As the degenerate fop of London, on visiting his ancestral halls, stands aghast before the suit of armor which his ancestor wore with ease at Marston Moor, but which he could not carry on his shoulder as a burden—or as the lisping dude of America, on visiting the old homestead, gazes with awe on the long rifle his ancestor aimed a hundred times at Bunker Hill, or lifts from its sacred shrouding in lavender the heavy uniform coat which he can nearly double around his attenuated form, he realizes with a pang how far away a race may drift in a century from the type which furnished the vitality that he now wastes in midnight orgies. One could hardly believe that the tremulous legs which performed the evolutions of the field in 1870 were lineal descendants of the sturdy limbs which crossed the Alps behind Bonaparte or made the mad charge at the bridge of Lodi. In more ways than one a nation advances on its legs.

Victorien Larue, we say, was a good type of the ripened fruit of a half-century of debauchery. At thirty his head was bald and shining, while on his lip reposed a ferocious mustache. A decaying tree sends forth moss in profusion, and a decaying and attenuated race, which has no locks of strength on the head, has often the moss of decay on the cheek and lip. The hand trembled with the effects of incessant absinthe-drinking, and as it caressed the mustache it shook as with age. The form was short and stunted, and was an evidence of the truth of the startling fact, that the average of the French army was an inch below that of any other army in a civilized nation.

The legs, when in motion, had an uncertain hinge at the knee, and seemed to respond but weakly to the will of their owner, and were liable to carry him, at times, to the right or to the left of the point aimed at. The eyes were sunken, and had the haggard look which indicates watchful and wasteful nights. On the whole, any sensible person would find the alert and wholesome age of the sire at eighty more pleasant to look upon than the decaying youth of the man of thirty. This unwholesome fag-end of a burned-out manhood, was the only hope and scion of the Marquis Larue. Languidly he looked up and asked :

"What would you have me do?"

"Who is it that stands between you and the fortune of both our houses?" asked the Marquis, with a sneer.

"A beautiful little cousin, Aimée Boh by name," answered Victorien, with a smile.

"And where is she now?" hissed the Marquis.

"I have reason to think she is in this chateau," Victorien answered coolly.

"Yes, she is here, and in our power; and then, what hinders us from taking away that obstacle, the only one between you and the vast estates we see from this window?" and the old Marquis pointed out across the lawn toward the forest. It was a pleasant sight. The chateau had been built with some regard to its surroundings. At the left was a dense forest which had been spared the ravages of war, as it was so far from the field of active operations. Down a gradual descent in front rolled the meadows, now quite brown, and only in spots, where the warmth of springs had protected the roots, was the grass still green. Further down in front ran the quiet river, now sparkling beneath the sun, where it was stirred by the wintry wind. On the right stood the scattered houses of the village, and just beyond were the tents of a detachment of the German Army. Here and there over the brown fields roamed the cattle, as yet spared by the hand of the German army. As Victorien languidly sur-

veyed the rising smoke from the houses in the village, and remarked the sparkling stream, he said, thoughtfully:

"Yes, it is beautiful."

"You did not answer my question," said the Marquis.

"What hinders, you ask. Many things hinder. You say she was left in care of the American Ministry in Paris. When peace arrives, inquiry will be made for her. We will not be safe with Aimée dead. We dare not prove her death, and then—what? We will be the same as now. And more, I do not wish any violence, my dear papa;" and he went on with his cigarette-smoking.

"Why not marry Aimée?" asked the Marquis, abruptly.

"A man can marry when he can do nothing else, and a Frenchman's wife generally is like a butcher's wife—she has the scraps that are left after the day's sales are over. Good! I will marry Aimée, and then we will be safe;" and Victorien complacently caressed his mustache.

"Good!" said the Marquis, "you shall visit her as the friend, the tender-hearted son and sympathizer. Tell her that marriage means freedom. Tell her this chateau will be her home. I think she is too young to have formed any attachments, and you will know how to win her."

"Possibly," said Victorien, "it may be necessary to tell me of the sex; possibly not. If I knew as much of international law as I know of the sex, I would volunteer to go as minister to Russia. Lead me to my fate, my respected papa."

Down the splendid hall they walked and up the wide staircase and stopped at a door. Aimée was in no dungeon. Her room was one of a suite splendidly furnished, and her window looked out over the wide domain her father had taught her to think her own by birthright. This window was secured by an iron grating. Otherwise, she was waited on by servants, and treated with as much respect as though a guest in the chateau. A pretence was made of great care for her safety, but

still she knew she was a prisoner. During her month of confinement her mind had been filled with thoughts of her father, and her grief had distracted her thoughts from any danger to herself. Occasionally she had thought of the American who had won her heart, and at those moments she wondered that no effort had been made to search her out or effect her release. She had never really feared violence from the Marquis. She knew of his desire to secure her fortune, and had thought his love of gain would not drive him to crime. Hers was one of those elastic natures which seemed to be compressed into a new strength by adverse circumstances. Her childish features had taken on a mature look which added to her pensive beauty. When the door of her room was opened, she arose and faced the Marquis and his son.

"Aimée," said the Marquis, "you have never met my son. Victorien, this is your cousin Aimée."

"It is with rapture I meet my cousin," said the exquisite Victorien; "too long have I been deprived of that pleasure. Allow me," said he, attempting to kiss her hand. With a look of intense disgust, Aimée drew back and contemplated the grinning burlesque of a man.

"Such beauty should not be shut away from the world," he continued, in that tone which had been successful for so many years among the *demi-monde.*

"Who chooses to sequester my unworthy charms from the world? Not I, I assure you," said Aimée, with anger. "If you or your father have reasons for confining me here, do not attempt by flattery to conceal your motives."

"Mademoiselle is unreasonable," said Victorien. "Who should furnish a home to you if not your nearest relatives? To whom will you go if we throw open the doors and bid you depart? Two armies interpose between you and Paris. If you could trust our German invaders, still you would doubt the army of the Republic, and, worse still, the Commune. Here you are safe and in seclusion, and

we are not only bound by the ties of blood to offer you a home, but since I have seen you, my fair cousin, I am constrained by a new force to shield you from all harm;" and the withered pigmy laid his hand on the padding of his coat, above where science locates the organ of life.

"I think I can leave you to win the affections of our little cousin," said the Marquis, as he retired from the room with a sardonic smile on his face.

"Farewell, my dear papa; you need not fear for my angel-cousin and myself, for we shall know how to spend the time;" and Victorien kissed his fingers to his vanishing sire.

Readiness to resent an insult is not always an evidence of female purity. There are natures so pure that a gross idea is a novelty, and hard to understand. Reared in such seclusion that absolute innocence is again revealed by another Eve in a modern Paradise—such was the condition of Aimée as she gazed without fear on the closing door and the grinning face of her ape-like cousin. He approached her on his uncertain legs in a circular manner, and said:

"Aimée, my cousin, why may we not bring to a conclusion all the scheming of the last three generations of our family by uniting our fortunes. These are troublous times, and you have no home. I offer you my hand, heart and fortune;" and he again dramatically touched his narrow breast.

"I do not understand you," said Aimée.

"That is strange," said Victorien. "I offer to make you my wife. I am determined to marry and settle down on my estates here. Since I have seen you I have become the slave of the grand passion. Aimée, my child, you are lovely," and he extended his hands. Aimée looked at him out of great childish, wondering eyes, and simply said:

"Monsieur, it is impossible!"

Her coolness and directness gave a sting to the calm

words, and Victorien looked at the closed door and approached her more closely, saying:

"Mademoiselle answers as coolly and calmly as if she stood in the grand *salon* with a crowd around her. Aimée we are alone. Give me a kiss, Aimée."

Still she did not understand him, and only drew back with a deprecating glance and uplifted hand, saying:

"Victorien, if you are my cousin I need only tell you that I cannot marry you. I am but a child in experience. I demand of you the protection which a child may expect from a man and a relative. Please go away and leave me."

"Ah, Aimée, you are too beautiful, and I must win your love. A kiss, my angel—a kiss!" and the baleful flush of a base passion which lingered in the ruins of his manhood, as fire lingers among the charred timbers of the house it has destroyed, flashed out of his sunken eyes as he grasped Aimée and drew her to his breast.

Then all the horror of her situation rushed upon her comprehension, and she struck him madly in his weazened face. He went reeling backward with a curse on his lips. As he gathered himself and approached her again, she said, in a whisper of concentrated anger, at the same time grasping a heavy chair and raising it over his head as if it had no weight:

"If you touch me again I will kill you!"

White with anger, the cowardly wretch stood before her as the door opened and the old Marquis entered and gazed on the tableau. The chair was still in the air, but slowly it sunk, and a shriek of such awful intensity rang out from Aimeé's lips that the old servant-woman ran into the room, and the Marquis and his hopeful son slunk out, leaving the unconscious girl to the ministrations of the nurse.

The tremulous Victorien was brushing the dust from his soiled coat, and straightening the crumpled linen of his erstwhile immaculate bosom, as they walked down the wide staircase and the long hall.

"You see it will not work, my son. Easy means will not remove the obstacle in our path. I bought our freedom from the bandit Le Noir, and if I can find the smooth-faced villain again, he will place Aimée where she will never cross our path again. Shall I send for him?" asked the old Marquis.

"I am ready for anything now," said the amiable Victorien, showing his faultless porcelain teeth. "Crush her in any way you please, but be quick about it, for in a few days peace will be declared, and in a new form of society, perhaps, our methods will not pass as readily as they would in a time of war. Put her in the hands of Le Noir as soon as you will. I care not."

"That is our plan, then," said the Marquis. "She must disappear. Her father is dead, and when she is gone, farewell to fear. We shall succeed. Ah! who shall hinder?"

"I jest want tew leave one of these ere yaller dodgers in every house. I can't supply the goods now, but when this cruel war is over, as the poet says, we will show yew some soap that isn't deleterious, anti-malarious and qualities various. A chromo card goes with every cake——"

The voice was heard at the open door, and the Marquis sprang forward with a curse on his lips.

"Hello, Marquis! How hev you been since our little episode in the old skatin' rink. I heard a woman scream, and didn't know but the house was afire, or somebody's pug-dog had a fit," and Sturgis smiled broadly.

"You cursed Yankee soap-peddler, how dare you crowd uninvited into my door? If I should serve you right, you fool, I would set my servants to flog you down the avenue to the highway," and the Marquis frothed with anger.

"Yew needn't go out of your way to bestow any little attentions like that on me. I am travelling incognito, and as a private citizen. I deprecate all style. Stick that ere dodger up in the kitchen, and when yew want

soap give the sunflower a chance. Bye-bye, Marky," and Sturgis took a long look at the hall and stairway, and went out whistling. He stopped, and wetting a sticker, left one on the park gate.

CHAPTER XV.

FALSTAFF: I will not lend thee a penny
PISTOL: Why, then the world's mine oyster
Which I with sword will open.

THE recovery of Napoleon Smith was rapid, as is generally the case with wounds in the head. With the return of memory came that ambition which is a spur to the reparative powers, and causes every force of nature to hasten to the assistance of treatment as ready soldiers hasten the line of works under a loved commander's eye. In a week he had so far overborne the objections of the Doctor as to appear in my office with a bandaged head, and that sidewise droop at the neck from which he would never recover. He even, in the spirit of banter, attempted to whistle the ridiculous tune to which I had made such strenuous objection.

"All right," said I, "whistle if you wish, and take out your knife and whittle a chair if you wish. Anything to remind me of home. I tell you Smith, I am getting tired of France, and I think we are nearly at the closing scene of the siege. Trochu would be a madman to hold out now that the Germans are sending shells into Paris. I had hardly expected this in the nineteenth century—shelling a city like Paris is nothing but vandalism and murder."

"That is your unmilitary view of it," said Smith. "So the world looked at the horrid campaign of Grant in the Wilderness; but it was only heroic treatment with military medicine. The fiercer the means, the quicker the return to peace. Sixty-pound shells crashing through the palaces of Paris are the great bolus pills of the old school of heroic medicine. You see, Mister Secretary, I

am lately from the hospital, and use medical terms," and he laughed.

" If I remain in Paris much longer I shall be qualified to give an opinion on military affairs as well as the affairs of state. But, Smith, have you forgotten the mission which brought you to Paris ?"

" I have not forgotten it," said Smith ; " I have only allowed a more momentous subject to eclipse it for a time. I guess that is the experience of mankind generally. When close to death's door, the thought of wealth has to take a secondary position, and when a deeper passion than the love of life gets hold of a man, wealth is totally obscured," and he blushed like a boy.

" So you think now the winning of the Lieutenant's little girl Aimée is the great and supreme object in your life ?" said I, thinking of the strange scenes I had witnessed in the hospital.

" I not only think so—I know it ! Say, Mister Secretary, I could die for that little woman, and I am impatient to be out and at work at her release, wherever she may be. I left her in the company of her worst enemy—the old Marquis—and in the power of a gang of bandits, but I believe she is hidden away by her uncle, and her life, at least, held sacred. I will get a passport from the General, and start out as I am, if I do not soon hear of her."

" I believe we shall sooner hear of her at the Legation than we should by any attempt to seek her out. In the meantime, while we wait, I want to ask you what you meant by the hint in your note, that you had found the hidden treasure. You may be as romantic as you wish in your fury of love, but I am still a practical Yankee, and would like to know something of that misty fortune in which I begin to believe ; " and I gazed with interest into the face of Smith, awaiting an answer.

" Well," said Smith, thoughtfully, " do you remember the copper-colored letter N in the paper I gave you ?"

"Certainly I do—two of them. One on each side of a room in the diagram," I answered.

"Well," said Smith, "I have had my hand on those two letters."

"No!" said I in astonishment.

"Yes, on the night of the terrible rising of the Commune, when I came here at daylight all bruised and bleeding, and Aimée nursed me back to life;" and he seemed to forget the great discovery in the sweet recollection of Aimée's tender care.

"Where, then, are those letters? Where is the building in which you saw them?" I asked, in breathless interest.

"I do not know," said Smith, carelessly.

"That is strange," I answered. "Cannot you tell in what part of the city it was?"

"I cannot. I only know I was forced along by the mob, and at a certain place they tore down a building; the soldiers fired on the mob; I was forced through a window, and fell on a stone floor. There I saw the letters of copper, and a garden," said Smith, dreamily.

"Perhaps you were delirious and dreamed it," said I.

"I am not that kind of man, and, furthermore, dreams do not break a man's head or tear his clothes off his back," said Smith, testily.

"Very well, then," said I, "A walk will do you good, and there is a way in which we can locate this building in which you fell. Now, you go out into the street and stand exactly where you stood when the mob closed around you, and then pass along where you think the mob forced you to pass. In this way I think the thread of memory will catch up the vanished pictures of the strange experience of that day. Will you do it?"

"Come on," said he, "let us try."

After quite a long walk he stopped, and looking around, said:

"Here is where the mob closed up around me. That is

the side street down which came another crowd with red flags. "Come on!" and he walked rapidly ahead.

"Ha!" said he "here I fell, and was about to be trampled to death, when Sturgis pulled me up and put a red cap on my head. Strange fellow, that Sturgis!"

After another long walk, he said:

"Here is the big square were they pulled over the monument."

"Good!" said I; "You are doing well. This is the Place Vendôme. Go on."

Then another long walk, and crossing the Seine, Smith asked:

"What bridge is this?"

"The Pont Royale," I answered. Then he passed rapidly along, and at last said, with a shudder, "Ah! here we are!"

"What!" said I, "I might have known it; it is the Tuileries Palace!"

"Yes," said Smith; "there stood the Garde Mobile; here I was jammed up against this wall. There is the broken window sash. And there I fell," and he pointed down into the mass of ruins.

I looked about me. Very few were in sight. The beautiful palace was only a heap of ruins. No one guarded the once royal portals, and I glanced all around, and then sked Smith if we should descend into the dismantled and crumbling ruins. Hastily we found a mass of crumbling masonry, which formed an irregular stairway into the old deserted kitchen, for such it evidently was. One moment I lingered to look on the trampled park and the stumps of the once beautiful trees, which had been cut down for fuel, and then I followed Smith into the silent ruin.

"We must hasten our researches," said Smith, and he went directly to the centre of the room, and there took his bearings. In an instant he had kicked away a mass of mortar and rubbish, and underneath it was a copper N, now green with neglect and damp. It formed the

centre of an arabesque ornament in the mosaic floor. Crossing the room, Smith pointed to a companion pattern, and in its centre another copper N.

I will confess that I was breathless with excitement, as I said:

"These are troublous times. Perhaps this will be our only opportunity to prove whether this be the place or not. Let us test it!"

"More easily said than done," said Smith, as he studied the pattern of the ornament on the floor. At last he stooped down and pushed against one end of the letter, and it turned; it turned further. It was evidently fastened to a screw, and as it was turned the thread of the screw pushed it up from the floor. At last it would turn no more.

"What is the obvious meaning?" asked Smith. "Why, that this letter N thus turns up for a handle. Secretary, you are stronger than I; take hold of that N with both hands and lift."

The result was so sudden that I nearly fell backward, and brought with me a thin ornamental stone about two feet square, apparently thus thin for the purpose of covering. What we saw under the level of the stone floor was so in accord with every strange act of the wonderful Bonaparte, that for a moment I stood as if in a trance. Only one man out of a hundred thousand men would have concealed fabulous wealth so carelessly, that in a half-century it would have remained perfectly secure, and would then only be discovered when revealed by his own intent. The one man who would have no concealed stairways, deep vaults, or heavy stone or iron doors, was Bonaparte, for there under the thin stone floor, in a square space like a box, where for fifty years servants and lords and ladies and all had walked over it day after day, had reposed hundreds of millions of dollars in gold, poured in in the broad pieces of Spain, the wedges of India, the beautiful coins of Italy, the Louis of France, and the thick sovereigns of England. Here it lay, a mass of uncounted gold.

Here De Bressac could tell why from 1820 to 1840 there was a dearth of gold to do the world's work.

"Fill every pocket," said Smith, "for this is now a matter of simple hard work to carry away this treasure. Store it at the office of the American Minister. Find trusty men to assist, and when all is secure you shall be rewarded."

We seized all that we could carry without suspicion, and filled every available pocket. Then the letter N was screwed down again.

"I am curious on one subject," said I. "Before we go, Smith, turn up the other N, and let us see what we have to do to remove this wealth."

With trembling hand we turned up the tell-tale letter, which had revealed nothing until their master willed. It was a companion piece to the other. A simple nest in the pavement where reposed the plunder of a score of nations. We hastily covered the spot with mortar and stones again, and clambered out to the street with our several loads of treasure.

"It seems almost like a crime in which we are engaged," said I.

"It is mine," said Smith. "It has come down through the years, and has fallen at last into the hands for which it was intended. Probably no court would allow my claim—in fact, it would probably be laughed at; but you who know my history, and how I became possessor of the secret, must admit that it is mine. I have now a desire to hold it—not for the mere possession of wealth, but to carry out the wishes of a great ruler; and more, I wish to succeed in this undertaking for the mere pleasure of success. It will be a work of some danger, and will take some time, but I wish every coin and bar of that gold securely housed in the cellars of the Legation. I trust that entirely to you—I am bent on seeking Aimée and finding her if she be alive."

"I hold that you are the heir to this treasure, and when it is once safely stored away, I will guarantee its

safe delivery in America. What a joy it will give the commerce of the world when it once more lubricates the wheels of business! But cheer up, Smith! If we are as successful in our next quest as we have been in this, we need not complain."

When we reached my office, it was my intention to enter quietly and deposit what gold we had secured in the office safe. For that reason I went ahead and noiselessly entered the room to see if all was clear. What was my astonishment to see on the couch, asleep, a ragged form, snoring in a comfortable manner. Motioning backward with my hand, Smith entered and came up to the couch to see what I was staring at. The man on the couch was a large, well-proportioned, middle-aged man, but his features were unrecognizable on account of a large, variegated bruise involving one eye, and a black silk patch over the other, giving the impression that it was worse off than the visible one. The frock-coat was held together by one button, and the trousers were covered with mud, and at one knee the healthy, muscular leg was visible through a large rent. Beside the couch, on the floor, reposed a once tall sik hat—now it was a sad wreck. As Smith looked down at the weary sleeper he smiled; then another look, and he laughed aloud; then, when the sleeper awoke and gazed at us with one swollen, disfigured eye, he roared. I joined him for a moment, and then the wreck arose and sat sidewise on the couch, saying in a reproachful voice:

"Gentlemen, the jig is up."

"Why, great guns! it is Sturgis," said Smith.

"Yours truly, Nehemiah Sturgis, General Agent," said he dolefully. "I came to France enthusiastic for travel and generàl information and experience. The travel has been what yew might call disjointed and humpy in spots, the general information has been liberal and variegated, and the experience all that was advertised, and a large and imposing street parade throwed in. Air yew onto me?—the jig is up—U P—large Roman capitals," and he

tried to wink with the discolored eye, and the attempt was painful to look at.

"Why," said I, "Sturgis, I left you at Brinvilliers after my balloon *fiasco*."

"Yes," said he, drily, "yew left me there, and I got left a good deal worse after that, tew."

"How did you get through the lines?" I asked.

"How does a bundle of wheat git through a threshing machine? I was fired through, Look at me!"

Smith nearly burst in his attempt to smother a laugh, but he was instantly sobered by the next remark of Sturgis. He turned a sorrowful look on Smith, and said:

"When I remark that the jig is up, I mean in reference tew the leetle gal Aimée. She's a goner!"

Smith jumped to his feet excitedly and asked:

"Have you been near her, and have you seen her?"

"Why, where else would I be? The Secretary, there, told me tew keep an eye out, and, by George! both of 'em's out, I'm afraid; but I was there on the ground with my bills up, and the show had tew go on. Well, here I am—yew kin see whether business has dragged or not."

We sat down and listened to his story, which will be easier read reduced to English than in his vernacular.

CHAPTER XVI.

LEAR : Better thou
Hadst not been born than not t' have pleased better.

STURGIS at the village of Brinvilliers had been a startling and meteoric success. France was far advanced in civilization and in art, and was also the centre of fashion and gayety, but there remained one great and glorious production of the nineteenth century which France had not yet been introduced to, and that was—the American drummer! There were heights of effrontery which even a Frenchman gazed at with a dizzy feeling and an involuntary clutching at the air, as though dreaming of a fall in a nightmare. There were a nerveless and adamantine cheek and a childlike stare which froze the very marrow of the shocked and paralyzed Frenchmen.

At Brinvilliers the simple inhabitants gathered about Sturgis and examined him as though he had landed during a thunder-storm in company with a meteorite. They pitied his simplicity at first, and the kind-hearted among them warned the shrewd and crafty that they must not take advantage of the wild American. Sturgis absorbed this pity as a Virginia soil assimilates dew and rain. Other kind-hearted men offered advice on etiquette and social laws, which also sunk into the receptive soil of the drummer's nature. He was as open to all advice and sympathy as is a flower to sunshine, and in as genial a manner he took everything in, even to the men who gave the advice. He opened and expanded like a flower. It was only the second day at the cabaret that he inducted a select audience into the mystery of the string game. He was tossing the string from him and letting it coil itself loosely on the floor. As it fell in loops like a figure 8 he asked one of the group to put down his finger in a

loop so as to catch the string. Then did Sturgis pull away on his string, and lo, the Frenchmen were too shrewd for him and he sighed sadly. Then the youthful and very smart ones wished to bet many francs that they could catch the right loop every time, and then did Sturgis cheer up and take all bets, and after that, strange as it may appear, they could not put down a finger so as to catch the string. It was very wonderful, and Sturgis was still so childlike and bland that everybody was happy. Then, as he became more popular, he sported with three walnut-shells on his knee, and the little joker was first under one shell and then under another, and bets poured in eagerly. In a day or two, as the interest deepened, he introduced three cards which the lookers-on declared were possessed of a devil, for they changed their color and the number of spots even as they betted on them; yet with it all Sturgis took only what money he needed for his necessities and gave the rest back to his victims, and they spent most of it for wine at the cabaret, and so he was the most popular man at the little hostelry, and the most popular man in the village. Pity gave way to respect, and if Sturgis had advertised to ascend to the moon on a certain date he would have had an expectant audience on hand at the specified time. He was a ventriloquist of no mean powers, and could give a twist to his tongue in whistling so that two distinct tones would be heard at once. In fact, he had all the exquisite accomplishments of the hotel reading-room and the smoking-car, which are necessary in the calling of the travelling salesman. He caught buzzing imaginary flies on the old curé's head and he tore open the notary's long coat with a rushing sound of rending cloth, which made the startled old man reach up his back to see how far his garments were torn open, only to find the cloth intact and the happy Sturgis smiling broadly. Yet with all his boyish love of fun, there seemed to be a relish for information. As he sat in the cabaret sharing a bottle of

wine with the old notary, Lebar, he looked out at the chateau and said:

"If the estate and village are called Brinvilliers, how does it happen to be in possession of the Marquis Larue?"

"Hum—m!" grunted the old notary, "it is not a wonder that you ask that, and you are not the only one that asks it. Since the time of Louis XVI. the Brinvilliers have been cast out. The estate has been a tennis ball racketed to and fro until, under the third Napoleon, it went to a distant branch of the family; but now, under the Republic, there will be an overhauling, and the child of Lieutenant Boh, if alive, will be the heir."

"Well, she is alive, and I have seen her," said Sturgis: "and more than that, I know she is now in the chateau with the Marquis and his son."

"You must be dreaming, my friend," said the old curé. "She would not trust herself in the power of her enemies."

"No, I do not dream, my friends, for I have seen her. I was in a party of prisoners taken by the bandit Le Noir, and the Marquis and Aimée Boh were set free on the payment of a ransom. I escaped, and followed them here. Do I not know her, when I have talked with her and called her by name?" and Sturgis spoke in such a confident tone that the old curé and the notary sat and gazed upon him in astonishment. He went on, lowering his voice:

"I know the room where they keep her. It is at the head of the grand staircase, at the back of the chateau. There are grates on the window—you can see them from the back of the chateau, in the orchard—and yesterday I heard a scream there, and I went in without knocking and found the old man and his son—I think the tailor-made ape was his son—coming down from that room. They were angry and excited. They had failed in some plot, for they came at me with curses for coming in without ceremony. We cannot always stand on etiquette, messieurs, can we?" and Sturgis smiled.

They went into ecstasies of merriment at his *naïvete.*

"And then," said the curé, "they threw you out, probably, with very little ceremony."

"Hardly," said Sturgis. "I know not why, but the men are few who would attempt liberties with me. No, they told me to go, and I went. Now, I should think the people of the village could be stirred up to release Aimée if they knew she was a prisoner, and knew she was the heir of the Brinvilliers estate. As we say in the United States, if this thing was boomed, the release of Aimée would be certain."

"You have, my friend, what you call the horizontal head—or is it the level head? That is it—you have the flat head on you, and we will speak of this among the people soon. If I send some of the men to you, can you prove that Aimée is in the chateau?" asked Notary Lebar.

"Yes, indeed! To-night, at nine, send to me a few of the villagers, and I will prove to them that the heir of the Brinvilliers is a prisoner in the chateau. By the way, how do the people feel toward the Marquis? Is he a good master and landlord?" asked Sturgis.

"He is most heartily and cordially hated," said the notary. "He calls all laboring-men the *canaille.* He worships only the aristocracy, and cares nothing for God or man. He must have his rent, if it costs life and blood to get it. He is a sprout out of the mangled roots of the old *régime,* which should have been cut off in'98. Ah! when I think of the old days of the Beauharnais and Brinvilliers families! How in the vintage time the toilers sang on the lawn and danced under the great chestnut on the village green, and the great ones at the chateau were as parents to the peasants more than masters. Monsieur Sturgis, there were some pleasant things about old aristocratic France, though Heaven knows I am a good Republican;" and he sighed heavily.

"I know the feeling of reverence for old things which you describe," said Sturgis. "Whenever an old custom

is to be buried, we do not have to hire mourners. Everything, when it gets into the shade, has a sombre look, and if the devil were to die, some tender-hearted person would remember that he had a wonderful curl to his tail, and mourn for that. It was so with American slavery; but hurrah for the living present! Send down to me to-night, a few reliable men, and I will prove that Aimée is shut up in the chateau a prisoner."

"Well, until then, farewell," said the old notary, and he and the curé went out arm-in-arm.

At the cabaret, in the evening, the usual programme of marvellous feats and strange ventriloquial noises kept the villagers amused until nine o'clock, and then, with uncertain steps, they wended their way to their homes—all but a half-dozen who were still sober, and who remained behind. Among them was the old notary. Sturgis waited until all the lights were out in the village streets, and then led his little party to the back gate of the chateau garden. This was easily scaled, and an entrance effected thus into the orchard behind the chateau. Sturgis pointed to the grated window in the darkness, but all was still. How to arouse the prisoner without arousing her guards, was the query in the mind of Sturgis. He whistled in imitation of a nighthawk. No answer from the window. Then he tried the warble of a canary. It trilled among the frosty branches of the trees in a manner to astonish any naturalist, who would little expect such music out of-doors so early in the spring. All his art seemed at fault until he said to himself:

"What was that outlandish tune which Smith was always whistling? I'll bet Aimée would recognize that, It wasn't 'Hail Columbia,' or 'Star Spangled Banner,' or 'Red, White and Blue.' By thunder! it was familiar, too. War song, if I recollect, 'When this Cruel War is Over. Oh no; Skewball—by the great horn spoon, that was it!" Then he shrilly whistled 'Johnny Comes Marching Home.' Now the window inside the grating is heard to come slowly up. Then an apparation in white dimity

is seen outlined behind the iron bars, and a childish voice speaks in a trembling tone—

"Is it the American I hear whistling the ridiculous tune?"

It is an American Aimée, and I am sorry it is not the one you mean. If you could only imagine me to be the one you want—and here in the dark a little imagination will go a great way—it would yield me intense joy," said Sturgis.

"Ah!" said Aimée, "it is the American with the little cards, yellow dodgers, and wonderful soap. Well, Monsieur, what did you call me for?"

"Tell these friends here with me that you are Aimée Boh—that you are the heir of all the Brinvilliers, and you are kept here a prisoner. Tell them you wish to go back to your friends in Paris."

In French, in a pathetic tone, she told her story to the little party under her window. She heard smothered curses and grating teeth, and then she heard the notary say:

"To-morrow night, Mademoiselle, you will be at liberty, if every stone in the chateau comes down. Lie down, my child, and sleep. Friends are near,"

"God bless you all!" she said, and then called to Sturgis: "Where is Napoleon Smith, your friend?"

"Oh, he's all right! Getting well in the hospital at Paris. You will see him again soon," answered Sturgis.

They heard a muttered prayer and the falling of the sash, and then they dispersed to their homes in the darkness.

The preparations for the next evening's work were on a great and elaborate scale. A ladder was a portion of the equipment. A blacksmith with cold-chisel and sledge was another adjunct. Then there was to be a party of twenty men who would have fought until death for the American who led them. The only drawback to the success was the inordinate quantity of wine which all hands had drunk at the cabaret before starting. The sturdy

Jacques, who bore the ladder, would occasionally turn around to argue with the man behind him, and sweep down a whole phalanx with his long ladder; and the blacksmith, while swinging his sledge in imaginary combat, stumbled in the darkness, and the blow of the sledge came down on the toes of a tailor, who fell in front. A Frenchman with wine and enthusiasm judiciously mixed in his system, is an object of wonder to gods and men. This chateau, unless it surrender, will be another Bastille. Again the air of the returning soldier is whistled, and again the window is raised. She is all ready, she says Then the ladder is placed against the wall, and the blacksmith clambers up with sledge and chisel to remove the grates. He strikes only a few blows when they hear Aimée scream, and at the same time a strong hand pushes the ladder sidewise, and Jacques rides on the arc of a circle whose centre is the bottom of the ladder, where stands a group of astonished men, and then he strikes squarely on the top of his head in a last year's asparagus bed, and sinks in to his shoulders. In the annals of the village of Brinvilliers he is not mentioned again in the combat at the chateau. Sturgis seems for a moment astonished, but listens attentively, and hears the screams and curses recede down the grand staircase. Then he cries:

"To the front of the chateau!—to the front! my men."

When through arbors, dry flower stalks, and clumps of ornamented shrubbery they find their way to the front door, they are just in time to see a white-robed form pushed into a close carriage standing at the door, to hear a smothered scream, and then the postillions lash the four horses and try to drive on.

"A rescue—a rescue!" cried Sturgis. Aimée Boh is in this carriage. Tip over the carriage! cut loose the horses!" and then began as terrific a fight on a small scale as one will often see in a lifetime, the postillions lashing their horses, for a moment, until they were torn off and trampled under their feet. Then the villagers per-

ceived that they were surrounded by a band of mounted men, led on by a youthful man on a great black horse. This leader seemed only to use a riding-whip in the combat for the possession of Aimée. He rained blows on the upturned faces of the villagers until they screamed with pain. But in other portions of the field of battle, on the opposite side of the carriage, an occasional pistol-shot rang out in the darkness, and its red flash for a moment gleamed in the faces of the mad assailants. Taking the hint given by Sturgis, some of the peasants attempted to cut the traces of the horses, and others seized the wheels, trying to overturn the coach. Once or twice when these attempts were nearly successful, Sturgis saw that when the red flash of a pistol was seen a villager would go down wounded or creep away, groaning, out of the fight. He was unarmed himself, but saw with regret that this was no child's play, but really meant life or death to some one. He set his teeth firmly, and sprang into the *melée.* A horse reared over him, and he reached up, seizing it by the bit. Then he applied his immense strength to setting the horse down on its haunches, at the same time wrenching its head to one side. With a crash horse and rider went down in a heap. Leaping upon the man, he grasped his revolver, tearing it from his hand.

"Now I am armed! A rescue!—rescue for Brinvilliers!" he shouted, as he sent a bullet into another rider, and two riderless horses galloped down the avenue of the chateau.

Then into the encouraged group of peasants rode the youth on the tall black horse. The riding-whip was exchanged for a gleaming rapier, before which a couple of peasants went down with bleeding heads. A scream of pain was heard, and a cry which paralyzed the hearts of the villagers.

"Fly! fly! it is Le Noir!"

Sturgis was left alone as he heard the patter down the avenue of the retreating footsteps of his friends. He saw the two led-horses cast loose from the carriage and a pos-

tilion clamber into the vacant saddle, and then away the coach flew down the avenue. With a mighty spring he clutched the swaying boot of the carriage, nearly losing his clutch upon it as his muscles cracked with the strain. But he held on until his feet touched the ground, when he sprang up and seated himself on the wooden frame designed to hold the baggage of travellers. Then on either side he heard the clang of armed hoofs on the road, the low curses and talk of the men, and as he tried to think, he felt a deadly sickness creeping over him. A stinging pain caused him to put his hand to his face. It was covered with blood. His hat had been driven down upon his head until the slash of the rapier had only cut a long gash in the scalp. Unnoticed blows received in the fray came up for notice now with dull aches. One eye was swelling and almost shut. One knee was uncovered and bruised with the gravel of the avenue as he clung to the boot of the coach. The horsemen on either side of the coach talked in snatches as they rode.

"To the old abbey, I suppose," said one.

"Yes, to the old abbey. There is but little money and many hard blows to this woman stealing business. I wish the old Marquis had been at the devil before he gave the captain this job," the other bandit said.

"All is fish that comes to our net," said the other. "But what is this clinging here to the boot. Shoot me if it isn't that cursed Yankee soap-peddler, who seems to be mixed up in everything that is going on. I'll put a bullet in him if he crouches there."

"Yes, and perchance send one through into the mademoiselle inside the coach," said the other. "Let him alone till we tell the captain."

"This was comforting to the almost dying Sturgis, but he said nothing, trusting in that Providence who had brought him through so many adventures. He reached down into his hip-pocket for his captured revolver, determined to go down in a glory of red fire if he had to go.

The carriage stopped. Captain Le Noir rode slowly back, and when he came past the coach lamp Sturgis looked out and saw that he was playing with a silver-mounted pistol. He rode up and looked at the dark mass crouched in the boot, then said:

"Get down!"

Sturgis clambered down and stood shivering in the road. Captain Le Noir rode close up and peered into the face as well as he could in the darkness. Then he said in a musical voice:

"You are the meddling American whom I have shown mercy to once. You have crossed my path again. Are you ready to die?"

"I am as ready as you are, Captain Le Noir. I have never struck a blow but for the right. Perhaps I am as ready now as I ever will be," said Sturgis.

Le Noir meditated a moment, then put the pistol back in its holster, then cried out, "Forward, men!" and all the cavalcade was swallowed up in the darkness, leaving Sturgis shivering in the road.

"There yew have it, gentlemen, as the boy said of the measles. I crept down into the city and here I am. Aimée is a prisoner in the old abbey, and as the immortal Tweed said, 'What are you goin' to do about it?'" and Sturgis tried to pull his torn trousers over his naked knee, at the same time endeavoring to get off that ghastly wink with his swollen eye.

"Sure enough," said I, "What are we going to do about it?"

CHAPTER XVII.

BENEDICK: Thou and I are too wise to woo peaceably.

WHAT a barometer is the spirit of man! In the rude shock of the tempest, when nature seems to be struggling in the grasp of an unseen foe, the spirit rises until the sailor shouts in glee as he lies out upon the yard or clings to the shrouds and laughs defiantly. Then, also the hunter, as he hears the great stems of the trees groan and writhe, and the boughs far up in the skies twist and interlace, folds his outer garb with a stronger hand and stands more erect to meet the storm. Even so the soldier in the mad onset and furious charge rushes boldly on to meet his death, while another soldier equally as brave shivers with fear on the lonely picket post, amid the dead quiet of the still forest. The slow patter of rain does not more affect the soil than its dull sound affects man's spirit. The cold autumn breeze does not more certainly shake the idle leaf than it does the Æolion harp of man's sensitive nature. He opens, as does his brother flower of a richer hue, to sunshine. He droops under the dew. I suppose some must be happy when the sky is lead-colored and the ground sodden, while a cold breeze just lifts the fog and damply smites the cheek like the dying kiss of an aged man; or do the ones most happy only endure then by shutting out the scene and burying themselves in books, or possibly in dreams of brighter days? But as we recall the heavy days of sorrow, do they not come up in memory lead-colored and have a sigh of autumn winds or breezes of a late spring in them. Perhaps it is the hold which nature still has on the clay of which we are composed. It was a touch of an Infinite Master's hand which shrouded the Crucifixion in three hours of dark-

ness. There is a human moan in winter winds and a human laugh and merry smile in summer gales, that roll their chariots over bending heads of wheat, and leave their furrows in tangled heads of purple grass. It is good that our mother nature seems to sympathise with her weary children.

So it seemed to Aimée Boh as she awoke from a sound sleep the next morning after the abduction at Chateau Brinvilliers. She awoke with a heavy heart, and for a time looked up at the ray of morning light as of old streaming in through her barred window; but instead of the curtained window of her room at the chateau, she saw far up in the wall an open casement with fragments of curious carving about it, and across it she saw the bare limbs of a great tree that was stirred by the wintry winds, which she could hear sighing outside. She looked about her with surprise. Her couch was made up of a heap of coarse blankets, and over her was spread a long military cloak of blue cloth. She reached out one little white hand, and it touched a stone floor. With eager eyes she sought the door, and saw an arched doorway which was once of richly carved stone, but now was filled with a heavy door of rough plank. Then a flood of memories came over her, and she recalled the scenes of the preceding night. The friendly attempt of the American to save her, the cruel attack of the Marquis and his son; then the fierce combat, the shouts of men, the crack of the pistols, and later the mad galloping of horses and unconsciousness, and now her sad awaking. The blood of a score of generations of brave men was in her veins, and the fragile girl had indignantly struggled through her terrible experiences with more courage than many of a stronger mold might have done; but as she thought of the tender care of her father now dead, and her loneliness in the world, bitter tears welled up into her eyes from the fountains of grief in her breast. The low murmur of the wintry winds, the dark and dismal gloom of

the morning, were in consonance with her grief, and she wept freely.

"This," said she, "is death, and it only needs the last cruel parting of the spirit from the body, and I will be with my brave father in Heaven."

Then, as she heard a step at the door, and the heavy fall of the wooden bar which confined her, she sprang from her couch and stood erect. It was only an old woman with a tray containing food and drink in her hands. She looked surprised when she saw the beauty of Aimée, but she smiled horribly, and said:

"That is the way they look when they come into the band. I was so once. Ah, my bird, you will learn to sing even in as strange a cage as this."

Aimée looked at the bleary old creature, and then asked:

"Where am I?"

"You have been here before," said the crone. "Then you had company and money was able to ransom you, but you are not here for money now. I think you are in the old abbey to stay," and she chuckled.

"Then I am in the power of Le Noir, the bandit captain. He is so young he cannot be hard. I will soon be free," said Aimée, with clasped hands.

"Yes," said the crone, "Le Noir is young in years, but old in deviltry. But I know nothing of his plans, my pretty bird; he will do as he wills; no one says him nay but once, and his objection is generally his epitaph. Good-bye, my bird," and she hobbled away, chuckling to herself.

Aimée founded hopes on the discovery that she was again at the old abbey and in the power of Le Noir. She sat down on her couch and ate heartily of the rough viands spread before her. Then, with the same simplicity she would have used at her father's knee in childhood, she knelt down, and closing her eyes, she prayed. Did some old spirit that had long haunted these sacred ruins while in the flesh, now come back in the spirit to find a purer soul in childish tones putting up a prayer of simpler

faith than he ever knew? Let us hope so. It will do us no harm, and it may be a comfort to us in trial to dream that ministering spirits care for human sufferings and human aspirations. When the melting tones ceased and she arose, she saw that she was not alone in the room. Captain Le Noir stood with his arms folded across his breast, gazing fixedly at her. Did she imagine it, or was there moisture shining in his gleaming black eyes? He stood silent a moment, and then asked, in a musical voice:

"Aimée, are there many whom you love?"

"No, Monsieur; I am lonely in the world. My father is dead, and I have no friends. I have enemies, God forgive them! but few friends," said Aimée, in a troubled tone.

"Is there no one whom you love?" asked Le Noir, in a sterner tone.

"Monsieur, I am but a girl. I was reared by a tender father, and never mingled in the society of the great world. It may be that I do not know what love is," and she blushed and hid her face.

"If you had loved you would have known it," said Le Noir, in a passionate tone. "If there were one being whom you could gladly die for, for whose smile you could waste the day in watching or the night in endless toil; if there were a being whom you could feast your eyes upon from the foot to the head; one whose every spoken word should be the sweetest music, and you would waken in the night and imagine you heard his sighs; whose voice would come to you in your dreams, and you would awake smiling and happy with the echo of his tones; one for whom you would be so jealous that you would touch his face in sleep, so that he might awake and let you bask in the light of his eyes—girl, have you ever loved like that?"

"No," said the startled and blushing Aimée.

"Then you have never loved," said Le Noir, white with passion. "Your nature has awakened like a late

spring with icy brooks still hidden, but with here and there a spot of green. Shivering songsters trill a few thin notes in your chilly breast. Bah! and some call that love. When love comes it is king, like imperial summer. The very earth pulsates with life, and every little mound and margin of a pool sends up its offering to Heaven. Every bough has its song-bird, and every little weed its blossom. Heavens, child, you have never loved!"

"Why would Monsieur know if I have loved thus?" asked Aimée with bowed head.

"Because," he answered fiercely, "I would have you as honest with me as with him to whom you prayed. Aimée this may be your last day on earth!"

"Then," said Aimée, as her head bent lower, "there was a man whom I could love thus. He was a prisoner here with me. He is an American. He has the face of a hero and the heart of a saint. He is great in heart and soul, and I have let him press his lips to mine and talk to me of love. If this be my last day on earth, Captain Le Noir, then I shall carry that love with me to Heaven!"

The face of the Captain grew pale, and he shivered as with cold, but he spoke again in a lower tone:

"It is pride in his beauty, then, which you call love, or mayhap in his courage. But be honest with me, Aimée. Suppose his beauty blighted and the intelligence gone from his eye. Suppose his brown curls all tossed about his head, and the drivelling of idiocy on those red lips. Suppose him a child to be led by the hand while strong men laughed at his stumbling steps. Could you love him then?"

Aimée looked up in surprise, and answered with anger:

"I loved him as a man! I loved him for his intellect gleaming out of his eyes! I cannot conceive of my noble Captain as the helpless thing you picture. I am of a noble race, Le Noir, and would never mate with such as that. But it is impossible. You only paint a horrible picture to torture me."

"Ah," said Le Noir, "I knew you had never loved. Stand up; let me see what it was he loved. A child's face—a pure child's face! A girlish form, and a cloud of sunny hair. But pure, pure—O God, pure as the snow!" and he clasped his brow and shuddered. Then he said: "Your God you were praying to—you think he will save you from ill. Well, then, Aimée, know this; I am to-day to send your pure soul to Heaven or cast you into the hands of my savage men, to be a consort with them and be dragged down to their level. Which fate do you choose? But wait—I will show you first. Come with me," and he took her trembling hand and dragged her after him. Down the vacant aisles of the old abbey, with the songs and curses of a drunken crowd growing louder and louder in her ears; then a door was pushed open, and they stood in the old refectory of the abbey, where a score of Le Noir's gang were sitting at the long table deep in a drunken carousal. When they saw their visitors a shout went up.

"It is the Captain! Live the little black Captain! And see! his song-bird for the cage. Ah, the little beauty!" and one or two sprung to approach her.

"For God's sake, take me away, Captain! The other fate, Captain—let me die," and shivering, she clung to the Captain's arm. Back in her prison, she sank down on her couch with a cry of despair. "Oh, why must this fate be mine?"

"Because," said Le Noir, coldly, "you are superfluous in the world. You stand in the way of the Marquis Larue. You stand in the way of others. It is that marvellous English theory of Monsieur Darwin—the law of selection. The weak go to the wall, and the strong live and prosper. It is a grand theory for bandits and red-handed murderers, and your God does not interfere. Society grinds its flour, its *Canaille* its bran. The poor are in the mud, and the rich make roadways of their bones. The poor but beautiful women have only a resting-place

for a time among the *demi-monde,* and then the law goes on. Do you choose to die, Mademoiselle?"

"Yes, Monsieur—I will die. You shall put your pistol to my head and send me to meet my father; but first let me say a word to you. It is only the word of a child, but Mother Church will not have taught me in vain if I tell you first of a child's faith. The strong do not always triumph, nor the weak always fall under the wheels of society. There is a God, Monsieur! I heard it first from a mother's lips, and then in the church I heard another voice. It told me of martyrdoms, of struggles, of weak men and women who carried God's word into the whole world, and they died with pure hearts and firm hopes on the Son of God. I forgive you, Captain. See! I lay here a ring. It was my mother's. Here is a little ring my father gave me at my last birthday. You will send them to the office of the American Minister for the brave man I spoke of, and tell him, if you ever meet him, that I thought of him at the same moment in which I thought of my father and mother. And now, if Monsieur will look another way, I will pray, and then I will die."

Then she knelt with her face to the wall and silently prayed. As she prayed with absorbed attention, she did not notice the distorted features of Le Noir. She did not hear him groan and say:

"It is because she is pure as an angel that he gave her his love. God would not give so black a heart such a love. Pure, pure—O God, she is pure!"

Aimée did not see the transformation taking place behind her—a cap tossed away and black ringlets parted in the middle pouring down on a trembling breast. She did not see that casting away of a man's coat and the draping of a swelling breast in the long military cloak which lay upon the couch. She did not see creeping on her knees to her side a bowed form, and only knew of the transformation when she felt a soft touch on her shoulder, and heard a weeping voice say:

"Pray for me! I, too, am a woman. I am another woman creeping to the tomb of your Christ, and my name shall be Magdalene. Your God is too powerful for me."

That evening, when the wintry shadows were long in the old abbey churchyard, two steeds galloped madly away toward Paris, and one of them was a giant black horse; and on each steed rode a woman's willowy form. That night Aimée dismounted at the door of the American Legation and was folded in the embrace of Napoleon Smith, and the name of Le Noir, the bandit chief, was only heard in stories of the past. He had perished from the earth, apparently, and only lived in his deeds and their memory.

CHAPTER XVIII.

ARCHBISHOP: Let us on
And publish the occasion of our arms.

IN the joy of once more meeting his love, my friend Napoleon Smith had apparently forgotten his immense treasure. As he walked my office to and fro, with his lips pouring out that detestable habit indigenous to the United States—for I know no other nation that expresses surprise by a whistle, or indicates deep thought by the tone of the same human accomplishment, or gives vent to joy by the same shrill sound—I noticed that it was a happy note he warbled with such unction, and his favorite air. So I remarked in a vexed manner:

"Smith, you might allow your mouth to assume its natural appearance for a moment while you ask about that buried treasure. A man does not come into possession of eight or nine tons of gold coins often enough to make it a commonplace event."

"Ah, yes, Mr. Secretary, how about that money? Eight or nine tons, you say; I never supposed there was that quantity of gold in the world," and he attempted to whistle again.

"There is many times that quantity in circulation in the world, but it is often quiet and unseen. It is represented in bank bills, and often a nation does business for years without an eye scarcely seeing the real gold which the paper money represents. But in our case we have eight or nine tons of gold coin. It bears the stamp of all nations. Some of it is in bars of virgin metal as soft as lead. Have you given any thought to the problem of getting it home to the United states? I have it in the cellars here, packed in boxes and old kegs and barrels, and it is a matter of great responsibility to me."

"But," said he, "I leave that entirely to you. When peace comes get a permit to export marble or bronze works of art. Ship it as marble or ornamental iron-work. It is mine, and I may do with it as I wish."

"Smith," said I, earnestly, "you do not realize the vast wealth you will control. You will be the richest man in the world. You will be able to assist governments or to make them trouble. You may organize great improvements, lay out vast railway and steamboat projects, assist the commerce of the whole world, and enlarge the field of civilization and education. All this is in your power. Or you may be a sybarite and satisfy every passion or appetite of your nature, while you look out with a dulled vision on the struggles of your fellows, and smile as you recline inside the wall your wealth will build about you. Which course will you take?"

"Do you know," he answered, "I have given this subject more thought than you think I have. Will the world be any richer for my unearthing of four or five hundred million dollars in gold? Will there be any more bread or meat in the world after my find than there was before? Will there be any more coal in the mines or any more timber in the forests? Not a loaf of bread more. Not a coal more. Not a stick more of timber. How, then, is the world any richer for my discovery?"

"Sit down here," said I, "and I will follow along your lead, and will discuss a question which has shed more blood in its settlement than ambition or avarice. These howling Communists ask the same question you ask, and then answer it with howls of anger, and shed blood to emphasize the answer. Your question will be asked in the streets of the great cities in the United States in a few years, and blood will mark the answer in red italics on the page of history, for, my friend, it is the question of Capital and Labor. You hold that labor and labor only adds another loaf of bread to the world's store. Labor and labor only adds the timber and the coal to the world's work. Is that your idea?"

"Even so," said Smith. "The gold is not bread, nor coal, nor timber. Gold is an idea."

"Very good, my friend," said I. "Now here is a vast sum in gold. It is idle. Let us go back to America with it and set it at work. It is only an idea. Can you for a million of this gold buy a mountain in Pennsylvania which contains coal?"

"I suppose so," said Smith.

"Can you for a few millions more build a railway to the mountain of coal and bring it to the doors of the poor of the great cities?"

"Certainly I can," he said.

"Very good," I said. "Then your gold, which is but an idea, can put more coal in the world and make it really so much richer. Will you follow the idea farther and open with your golden key the storehouse of bread in the West, and lay iron tracks to bring it to the East, and then your gold will be bread? Or shall it become an axe and cut down the forest, or a saw and form the beam and board to build the house? Bah! this struggle of Capital and Labor is the fight of the right hand against the left. The right hand of Labor holds the hammer of toil, and the left the gold of capital to reward the toil. The gold is most certainly an idea only, for without the brains of Capital the right hand of Labor would be palsied with hunger. The Jewish nation revere to this day the name of Jacob because he dug a well and opened a fountain in a thirsty land. The man of Capital stands in a thirsty land of toil, and where he puts down his foot a fountain will spring up if he wills it, or the channels of water will go on their way beneath him, forever unseen. Let me enthuse thee, Napoleon Smith. What fairy spun a slender thread and threw it across the seas for electric thought to travel on? Capital. What brawny hand laid the iron road four times across our entire continent? Capital. What genii scattered the black hulks of steamers and white sails of merchantmen on every sea? Capital. Blot out this idea of gold, as you call it, and we

should be quarrelling over hawberries and ground-nuts in the woods, and be wearing wolf-skin garments won in the chase by the use of wooden spears and flint knives. You hold a wand in your grasp, my friend, which will evoke a thousand spindles, or a thousand whirling car-wheels, or a million picks and shovels from the earth, and with another touch and a broad slice to the poor man's loaf of bread. I pray God you may be wise."

"Amen!" said Smith, feelingly. "And now, Mr. Secretary, I will say after your wise address that I know no man so well calculated to care for this immense trust as yourself. I cannot divest myself of apprehension as I recall that time of forgetfulness when I lay at the door of death in the hospital. Such a time may come again. I know it may look childish to you, but think for a moment of my terrible experience. Now, I wish to leave a paper giving you absolute control of this money, and I know of no time so good as the present. Draw up such a paper, and call in Mr. Washburue to witness it."

"I accept the trust, Mr. Smith," said I, "not from any selfish motive, but from an idea which I have that it is a matter of national importance. Is there any suggestion you would make as to the disposal of any part of this wealth?"

"Yes," said he; "I may call Sinclairville, Maine, my native place. They were kind to me in my boyhood days. If ever this treasure reaches the United States safely, then write the authorities of the town that a million dollars has been donated to the village by the old little gamon they once knew as 'Nap. Smith.' Tell them, when they decide how it shall be expended, to draw on you for the amount. I can do no less for my old home than this."

"It shall be done, Mr. Smith. Is there any one else you would benefit among relatives and friends?" I asked,

"As I told you before, I have been a lonely boy and a lonely man. I have no relatives or friends," and he

sighed as he looked out of the window at the wintry landscape.

"All shall be done as you say, my friend, and I trust your apprehensions are without foundation. Sign your name here and we will complete the paper," and thus I became the manager of the immense treasure. I heard a light step at the door, and knew it was Aimée. In hopes that her presence would cheer my comrade up, I silently withdrew into Mr. Washburne's office.

"Aimée, my darling," said Smith, as he seated the little maiden on the sofa, "I have been arranging my business affairs. You know but little of business, I suppose?"

"But little, my captain," said Aimée. "I had a father who stood guard over my life, perhaps too tenderly, for now I find I am all un-prepared to fight the battle of life alone."

"Not alone, Aimée. Let us fight it together. But it will be no fight—only a skirmish—for I have that which brings peace or war. I have that which builds walls around the home to shut out cold in winter and heat in summer, that which shuts out care and makes the home vocal with song and laughter. Aimée, I never cared for money as I care for it now. If it can keep one pang of pain from this little heart, or smooth one line of care away from this brow, then money will be dear to me."

"Is Monsieur so rich?" she asked.

"Rich? Aye! rich indeed, now, with your love, but richer beyond what your heart can conceive. Aimée, if you dream of tall castles or wide domains, I can build vaster houses and overlap your domains with a thousand acres. Do you love art? Then the deftest hand and most skilful brush shall paint for you, and the chisel of the greatest sculptor shall dream in marble for you, and wake in snowy beauty at your call. Do you love soft carpets and rich tapestries? Then the world will be ransacked to feast your eyes. Ah! I grow poetic now, and worship the power of money because it will show my love."

As Smith talked and she listened he was startled to see her evince a feeling he had never noted before. It is said that the cat never loves its master or mistress only as it receives favors at their hands. It purs at the warm fireside and snuggles down to the soft cushion, but unsheathes its claws at a rough touch, even from a loved hand. So the years of tender care often breed a semblance of love, which is only gratitude for a softly cushioned life. The eyes of Aimée grew luminous, and her little hand fell into his broad palm as he told of his wealth. Her head grew erect as he told what gold would do, and she whispered:

"Napoleon, my brave captain, I, too, am the heir of such broad acres as you describe. I, too, have a chateau where the long halls echo to the footfalls of an army of servants, and on the walls are the pictures of the race to which I belong—the Beauharnais of the royal blood and Brinvilliers of a line of Dukes. But I have been wronged and a false relative has usurped my right. Your gold shall add lustre to a grand old name," and she arose and walked the floor with rapid strides.

"All that love can do, all that gold can buy, shall be cast at your feet, for, Aimée, I worship you, my child," said Smith in a constrained voice; but as he spoke a pained look came over his face, and he put his hand to his head and groaned with anguish.

Aimée stopped in her rapid walk, and looked at him in astonishment.

"It is my old wound," said he. "When I am excited the pang comes and I forget myself."

Strangely she gazed upon him, and thought of the fierce questioning of her love in the old abbey. As she pondered, a knock came to the door, and springing to his feet, Smith drew her to his breast and tried to imprint a kiss upon her lips. She pushed him back and thoughtfully walked away. An orderly came into the room and said:

'Captain Smith, the General would see you instantly at his office."

"I will go with you now," said our hero, as he donned his cap and buckled on his sword. At the General's office an unwonted commotion was found. Orderlies coming in and going out; mounted men waiting in the street; Trochu himself was pacing the floor, issuing orders to a clerk who wrote them down and transmitted them.

"Leave us alone for a moment," said the General, and in an instant the office was cleared of all but he and Smith, who stood with his cap in his hand.

"How is your wound?" asked the General kindly.

"Healing rapidly," answered Smith.

"Are you fit to sit in the saddle for a few hours?" the General asked.

"For a week, if necessary," responded our hero.

"Had you ever, in your American army, to send out what you call the forlorn hope?" asked Trochu, sadly.

"I think I know what you mean," said Smith.

"To morrow morning Paris will be surrendered," said the General.

"You do not mean it!" cried Smith.

"I wish I might be able to joke about it, my friend. To-morrow Paris falls. It is determined, but there is much to be done. A diversion must be created to conceal our distress while we prepare for the last scene in the drama. We dare not lie supine and let the enemy drift in upon us and find our stores and armament in disarray. A nation must have the respect of its conquerors even in the hour of defeat. We must hold our lines until the flag of truce brings in our foemen to assist in maintaining order. The Commune would cut our throats even in the capitulation. I am going to sacrifice good men in order to maintain order and decency in our downfall. Dare I say to many I am about to surrender? No. I tell you, my friend, and France will honor your name and the names of your comrades who fall, for I send you out to

fight a losing battle. You shall have the best brigade I have left. I give you orders to conduct it out to the German lines on the St. Denis road, and then fight until annihilated or night falls. I kiss you a good-bye, my brave comrade, and if we meet not on earth, may we meet in Heaven!"

Smith made no answer, but took the order from the hand of Trochu and went out.

The brigade to which Smith carried the deadly order was one that had remained loyal to a man during the siege of Paris. It was an organization which had among its officers legends of terrible deeds at Magenta and Sebastopol. Many of the men were grey-mustached, and had the swing in marching which fifteen or twenty years of experience gives. They had lived the best years of their lives under a knapsack and a tent. Their ranks were full, for they had been the main dependence of Trochu in his terrible experience in Paris. Every piece clanged to the ground as one piece as they ordered arms, and when they swung them to their shoulders it was as if a long serpent had turned his scales to the sun. Smith whispered to the commanding officer for a moment as he gave him the order. He did not change color or tremble, he merely wheeled the column into a hollow square and said in a ringing tone:

"My men, we are the forlorn hope! On us rests the honor of France when she droops in death. Not many of us will come back, but I wish to save as many lives as possible. Now hear me: We shall take the Germans' first line. If we can spike a few cannon, good! We shall lie down in the works. If they turn guns on us from other forts, we will get over the works and come back. For this, a few is as good as many. All who have wives and children in Paris step two paces to the front."

About a score stepped out.

"Right face—forward, march!" and the few married men marched away.

Then the line was formed and belts were tightened, and a few examined the hammers of their muskets. Not a man trembled, but many were pale. It is an axiom of war, "Beware the pale soldier who fights;" he will die, but he will not retreat.

"Have you ever seen such a forlorn hope in America?" asked the officer as he saw a G. A. R. badge on Smith's breast.

"Once," answered Smith. "It was Pickett's Division at Gettysburg. You will read of it sometime in history; and in the South a man who was in that charge will have hats doffed to him as to a king. Our Fourteenth Corps at Chickamauga was like it, too. Ah! I know what it means."

They were now rushing right over a picket line of Germans, who remained, and were some of them bayoneted in their pits. German reserves were ordered up, but this was no battle—it was only an advance to death. No supports of galloping artillery horse came behind them; no ambulance corps to care for the wounded. Wounds meant death, and not a hospital. Terrified at the resistless tide of French valor, the German line broke and ran back to their works. Drums beat to arms on the right and left, and bugles added their clangor, and now came what they had expected—the cannons opened on them from the fort.

"Fix bayonets!" rang out, and then, "Forward, double-quick—march!" and the mad rush came.

A soldier never seems to fall in love with a picture of a battle. He knows it can never be put on canvas. He without doubt regards it very much as a thrush would regard his song written out in notes in a music book.

There are a thousand things occurring at once. The cannons are booming; the man at your side is stumbling forward dead, and his musket flying from his hand; you are clambering over a bank of earth, and your feet are in the face of a dead man; you are yelling at the top of your

voice, and yet you do not hear it, for a louder din is all about you. For a moment you are one in a compact line, and in another moment you are one of a group of a half-dozen, and the noise grows less, for you have shot or driven away the gunners from the guns, and you see no enemy to fire at, and you stop and wipe the sweat and grime from your face and look around. You have captured the enemy's works. You look back over the path you have trod, and it is spotted with hideous hummocks of dead or writhing bodies. At your feet are several in the uniform of the enemy. One lies across the trail of the cannon; he has a swab in his hand yet. In front of the limber chest lie two more as they fell when about to hand ammunition. You feel sad, but—boom! they have turned the guns on you from the right and left. A shell buries itself in the earth and then explodes horribly with dirt and dead bodies, and a living one borne on its force high into the air. "Lie down!" calls an inferior officer—the one who commanded in the charge is dead.

Now they have our range, and every shell drops among us, and the guns are dismounted and torn apart. A limber chest is struck by a shell, and you all leap over the works to the escarpment to escape the explosion. The enemy see the effect of their fire, and now behind us rises a long gray line and gradually draws near. They are going to try to retake the works. The artillery ceases; they do not wish to shell their own men. The officer says again:

"Men, we cannot retreat! Save your fire, and stay on the works."

Very good, then. Cartridges are now laid out in bunches on the edge of the works before us, and we are going to stay here, alive or dead.

Oh, the mad joy of it! The line reels to and fro and then slowly retreats. We have no men to follow up our victory with. They reform; and now on the right and left approaches a flanking party. Now we will die or be

taken prisoners. If they face us we have a chance. If they surround us we must die or surrender. "Creep back, men! It is almost night. No running! Lie down and creep back."

Thus far Napoleon Smith told me of the battle; then a bursting shell tore off his scalp on one side; he whirled around once, and grasped at the air—fell, and all was dark. The forlorn hope had done its work.

CHAPTER XIX.

DUKE : What, is Antonia here ?
ANTONIA : Ready, so please your grace.
DUKE : I am sorry for thee ; thou art come to answer
A stony adversary, an inhuman wretch
Uncapable of pity, void and empty
From any dram of mercy.

Now is the cup of France's humiliation full ! The white flag has been sent out, and with much military pomp the commanders have met to arrange for the capitulation. Long did Paris argue and plead against the Germans entering the city. Take all the rich armament of her forts ; take the long rows of stacked muskets and count up the flags and guidons with the eagles, but for the sake of mercy and Heaven, do not make a Roman triumph of it by entering the city. But all the indemnity money to be paid in millions and billions of francs, all the glory of captured thousands, will be as nothing to Germany if she may not march her hosts of victorious troops down the avenues and boulevards and humiliate proud France in the dust. She would drag the French generals at her chariot wheels if she dared, for she has been storing up wrath against the day of wrath for half a century. Germany imagines that she cannot balance the books unless she blare with trumpets and bands in the streets of the French capital, as did the Little Corporal once in Berlin and Vienna. How certainly the wanton insults of that victorious army of Napoleon come back now, even to the shame of dismantled palaces, half-burned houses, and works of art trampled in the streets !

But what a strange silence pervades the German ranks as they pass in through the dreary streets ! No songs roll down the square-cut platoons and sections of the infantry. The heavy horses of the cavalry seem to step with rhyth-

mic regularity, as if they were only a part of a vast military machine. The German postillions of the artillery sit like statues on their horses, and evince no curiosity as they enter the city for which they have fought so long, and on the limber chests and caissons sit with folded arms the statue-like cannoneers, as motionless as wooden men. What is this army ? It is incarnate discipline. It is the lesson that all nations must learn now—that battles must be won, not by dash or surprise, but by perfection in obedience. What can courage or dash do with a stone wall ? Just batter itself into fragments against it, that is all.

And so the almost endless line moves along with sedate and rhythmic motion, and Paris gazes out of hungry and malevolent eyes upon her conquerors. As they turn with fan-like wheel by platoons they hear the rolling discharge of a score of muskets. The Prince turns to an aide and asks the meaning.

"It is the execution of squads of the Communists. They are drawn up against a blank wall and shot by the National Guard," the aide answers.

With a sneer on his lips the Prince rides thoughtfully along. The more of this fiery material is quenched in death the safer will be his conquest. He cares nothing for that, but we do, and we will go down where we hear the rolling musketry and see the strange sight. There is little of law but much of revenge in these closing scenes of the siege of Paris.

Here comes another squad from the prison. They are the Reds who clutched the throat of Paris and choked her down while she was in the throes of a mortal combat with a foreign foe. It is the misfortune of this cursed agrarian idea that it is always in the hands of devils who love blood and anarchy, and so all men's hands are against it. These Reds are the only men who sing in this pandemonium of surrender and triumph and blood. They sing in hoarse tones that come by late hours, harsh wines, and evil passions. They are now pushed back in a long

line against a blank wall, and the firing party take their muskets, every alternate one containing a bullet, and every alternate one a blank cartridge. No soldier knows whether he shoots a fellow-mortal or not. It is one of those shifts which Satan puts upon man to veil an evil. This is a short ceremony.

"Ready! Aim—Fire!" and a long row of writhing bodies falls in a swathe along the wall. The commanding officer motions with his hand. and the human clay is tumbled into carts and hurried away. Several of these Reds were found alive at the graveside, and lived to mingle in other riots. We are hurried now, in this exciting time, and even the killing is done carelessly.

The officer awaits the loading of the muskets and the bringing out of another string of Communists, and as he waits he curls his mustache and watches a group of French prisoners turned loose that morning from the field hospitals of the Germans. A few of them turn into the square and lean on their crutches to watch the executions. One of them is a small officer whose uniform is torn and muddy. He has no hat, for his head is swathed in bandages. Evidently he has had a cut from the sabre of an artillerist, for it comes down and involves one cheek in a long bandage.

Here comes an old gentleman, evidently, for he has white hair, and his face wrinkles with a sneer as he picks his way over the stones to see a batch of the *canaille* shot. It will relieve a picture he always carries in his memory, of tumbrils filled with the aristocrats, and they were consigned to the guillotine in the Place de Gréve. And now, as the old gentleman smiles in anticipation of feasting his eyes on the death of the hated lower orders, we can recognize him. Ah! it is the Marquis Larue. Yes, and yonder, with a slim cane in his hand and the head of it at his mouth, stands the grinning Victorien, his son. He trips circularly forward on his weak legs and smilingly says:

"My dear papa, you are here for the afterpiece to the play of the Siege of Paris. It is noisy, my papa, but well acted."

The Marquis smiles grimly and waits. Why, this is to be a matinée of our old friends, it seems, for yonder is Sturgis. A great change has taken place in his appearance, but it is he. He is cleanly shaven, and dressed in a half-military suit of superfine blue cloth; on his head a beautiful silk hat. The Marquis recognizes him with a scowl, and then contemplates his changed appearance with curiosity. Evidently dealers in soap have a lucrative business, he thinks, but says nothing.

Here they come, another desperate gang of cut-throats, singing a song of the Commune. Now the play will go on, but a commotion attracts all eyes to the Marquis Larue. The little French officer with the bandaged head leaps at the throat of the Marquis and cries in shrill tones:

"Seize him! It is the traitor Marquis Larue! I have been a prisoner with the Germans, and I have seen him in communication with the Crown Prince. For Heaven's sake, Colonel, seize the traitor!"

"What is this about?" says the officer in charge of the executions.

"It is the Marquis Larue. Curse him, he has sold us to the enemy!" cries the wounded officer.

"I have heard of him. Is this the Marquis Larue?" he asks.

"He will not deny it. See! he struggles to get away. Ah, mouchard, would you?" the little man cries as he chokes him down.

"Who are you?" says the Colonel, as he looks at the struggling officer clinging to the Marquis.

"I am Lieutenant Boh of the Guards. I was left for dead in front of Mont Rouge. I have been in the German hospital, wounded in the head, and delirious. Ah, villain, you shall not escape me!" and he clung like a monkey to the pale and writhing old Marquis.

"In the pay of the Germans, was he?" says the Colonel, with a scowl.

"Search him now—tear open his pockets!" cried the breathless Lieutenant.

With an eager hand the Colonel tossed from the pockets of the Marquis handkerchief, pocket-books, glasses—and now what is this? A map! A line of entrenchments—lines of figures—number of pieces of artillery. And here a safe-conduct from the German officers! A scowl of hate shadows the Colonel's face. The execution is waiting. The soldiers have their muskets, and stand at order arms, waiting.

"Put him with the Communists," says the Colonel white with wrath.

"You dare not!" shrieked the Marquis, "Even now the Germans are in the city. Curse you, let me go!"

"Put him with the Communists!" says the Colonel again.

They pick up the writhing form and hurry him across the square and drop him among the scowling *canaille* whom he hates. They embrace him—they laugh, and cry:

"Ah, we have with us good company—one of the men with spurs who ride over the toilers. Good! he will die with us."

But now the ape-like Victorien springs forward. Is it to defend, to support, the white-haired, breathless old man? No; he cries as he breaks from the crowd:

"The papers, papa—the papers from the Prince! The papers for the estate at Brinvilliers!"

"Ready!"—

"Come back, fool! they are going to fire," cries the crowd.

"Ah but, papa, give me the papers you have in the pocket-book"—

"Aim!"—

"Come back, or lie down. Oh, fool! look this way—do you see?" cries the crowd—

"Fire!"

The smoke clears away, and amid the tangled mass of Communists lies an old man with one hand yet in his breast, where he sought for the documents the son demanded—and across his legs, as he fell, was seen the dapper form of the son in a posture of pain, with his hands over his face. The carts rattle up and take their loads. A sedate German officer rides into the square to inquire into the executions, but they are over. The Colonel forms his men and marches away. In twenty minutes only some battered bricks in the wall, and a slow stream of blood working its way to the gutter, show where the last execution of the Communists took place.

Poor France! when will she learn that a godless revolution never prospered? When will she study the pages of history and learn that only where the theory meets the assent and accord of man's better nature can it be solidified in institutions that live? Consecrated swords cut deeply, and bullets carry a long distance impelled by prayer. Theorize and laugh and flout it, if you will, but Switzerland founded on a prayer hassock, and America entrenched in lines of village churches, are proof against the armies of the world. Better the Mohammedan shout of "Allah il Allah!" than the devilish shriek of Infidelity, "*Vive la Commune!*"

Lieutenant Boh stood with extended hands and a prayer for mercy on his lips when the volley of muskets settled his long account with the Marquis Larue. He stood astonished like a magician who had invoked the presence of the evil one, and then trembles at the sudden power of his incantation. Death came at his command like a bolt of lightning. As the Colonel rode away, the Lieutenant saluted and said:

"You will keep the evidence of his crime, so that if we be called to account for this we shall be able to show cause."

"The President shall see the evidence to-day. Borrow no trouble about that, Lieutenant," said the Colonel.

The crowd had dispersed, and still the wounded Lieutenant stood in deep thought, gazing at the blood-stained ground. Sturgis, who had lingered behind, approached him and said:

"I heard you say you were Lieutenant Boh. I am at the American Legation, and am deeply interested in your daughter, who is under our protection. She believes you to be dead, and I am afraid the shock of your appearance now may be too much for her loving nature to withstand. Will you allow me to assist you in this matter?"

"Why should she think me dead? Did she not receive my letters sent from the hospital?" asked the Lieutenant.

"On the contrary, she was informed by the Marquis that you were certainly dead," said Sturgis.

"I see. It was easy, as the bearer of letters from the German hospitals, for the Marquis to destroy my communications. Ah, he has gone to God to account for his crimes," said the Lieutenant. "But Aimée, my little girl, is she well—is she safe?"

"It would be a long story to tell you here, but she has been followed by the malice of the Marquis, and has been a prisoner in his hands for a long time, and was given into the hands of a bandit to be destroyed; but she is safe now," said Sturgis.

"Thank Heaven!" said the Lieutenant. "Well, my friend, if you will go and break the news gently to my little Aimée, I will, at a friend's house, prepare my clothing and cover my wound as I best may, and then I will come to the Ministry and meet my angel."

"Very well; come down in an hour," said Sturgis.

His mission was a difficult one. After we have mourned a friend as dead, and set up in our hearts a sacred monument of love, it is like disrupting the very earth beneath us in a whirlwind and earthquake of joy to learn that the object of our grief still lives. He found her looking out of the window on the streets, alive with an

unusual stir now that peace had come, but she looked up with a sad smile of welcome as Sturgis entered.

"Many will be happy to-day, Monsieur," she said, "though Paris is sad. Regiments will come back, husbands will greet wives, and fathers look once more on their children. Peace will be sweet, though purchased so dearly."

"Yes," said Sturgis, "I saw some wounded prisoners who had been in the enemy's hands. Some of them had been taken in the terrible sorties. Some had been supposed dead, but now come back to gladden the hearts of wives and children. There will be a double joy there, Aimée."

She looked up in surprise, and said: "Did you say, Monsieur Sturgis, that some who had been supposed dead came back?" and she clasped her hands.

"Certainly; they were left for dead, and were cared for in German hospitals. They were too badly wounded to write, or were not allowed to write, and now they come home as from the dead," and Sturgis looked away from her a moment.

"Ah, God is good! and if it were my father who should thus be spared—but no—they saw him dead!" and she sighed.

"Who *saw* him dead?" asked Sturgis.

"Napoleon Smith was at his side. He saw him dead among the cannon. It was in the papers too—I read it. They called him the brave Lieutenant Boh. No, he is dead! and I will find his grave and weep upon it soon, for the war is over," and she began to weep.

"Why, you have given no reason why your father may not be alive like others. A blow from an artillery sabre would make him unconscious, and he would remain so for some time," and Sturgis grew pale as he heard a step in the passage.

"Who told you he was struck with an artillery sabre? I never heard of that. Ah, you know something of my father. Tell it me quick!" and she sprang to her feet.

"I cannot—you will scream and faint away. I know how girls act when they hear good news," said Sturgis.

"I promise you I will not faint or scream. What is this talk of soldiers coming back? O Heaven, I think my father is alive!" and she rose and came toward Sturgis.

"There, I knew you would be excited. See how you tremble," said Sturgis.

"No, on my soul I am cool—I am collected. Now, how do you know my father was hurt with a sabre?" and she sat down.

"Because I have seen him—and here he is! There, I knew I should make a blob of it, to return to my soap dialect, for she is fainting away in your arms, Lieutenant."

"Aimée, *mon ange*, awake! Look! it is Hippolyte—it is your father. Ah, Heaven! she opens her divine eyes—Aimée lives, and I am happy!"

The meeting of the Frenchman and his daughter under such circumstances transcends in grandeur any powers of American description. Sturgis quietly left the room, feeling that his work had all been in vain, but he muttered:

'I wonder how they would have acted if I had not broken it gently?"

CHAPTER XX.

PORTIA: Now make your choice.

"WELL, I swan! ye been shut up here fur some time, ain't ye?"

I looked up from my desk to see standing in the doorway of my room a Yankee of such a pronounced type that I wanted to get up and hug him. He was a sea captain—one could see that at a glance. He had a shiny tarpaulin hat in his hand, and was arrayed in a short blue coat, double-breasted, and was ornamented with two rows of large black buttons. His hair was of that indescribable color which is known as sandy, but what endeared him to my heart was his style of beard. It is never seen only on an American, and is found nearest to Boston of any American locality. His face was smoothly shaven everywhere except under his chin, and from his neck and the underside of his jaws rolled out over his collar a long sandy beard. A kindly smile was on his face, and he was the personification of Yankee good-humor and shrewdness.

"Don't say a word," said I. "You are Captain Brown, of the brig *Sally Ann*, of Providence, Rhode Island, and you are loaded with oak staves."

"Out, by ginger!" he roared, slapping his thigh and laughing. "I am Captain Smith, of the brig *Amelia*, from Boston, loaded with codfish—haw, haw, haw!"

"No matter; you are an American, and you look good to me after being shut up in Paris all winter. I guessed you out, but I didn't hit the name, that's all," said I, laughing.

"Nor the cargo, Colonel—you didn't hit the cargo, and that's the main thing. The early bird gits the worm, and I am the early bird with a big round crop, and I want

the worm. See? I been waitin' for the siege to raise, and then in I come with a load of codfish. Codfish-balls will be a relief and a change from cannon-balls, and will lay lighter on the stomach. See? And hoss-meat—b'gosh, I hear these Frenchers been eatin' hosses! I hear the consumption of hosses has been fashionable—galloping consumption, probly. Well, here I am, been offered as good as eighteen dollars a hundred fur the whole cargo—nearly doubled my money! And how's Washburne; and how you fellers been through the hull darned war?" he asked, sitting down.

"Very well indeed—all of us. And what is the news in the United States now?" I asked.

"The same old news. Politics a-boomin', business a-boomin', and everybody is cryin' hard times when they ain't a-cuttin' off their coupons and countin' their intrust money. The United States is allus in trouble, but its ginerally growin' pains, like a big boy when his jints ache," and he roared again.

"Captain," said I, "are you a close man?"

"In my dealin's, dew ye mean?"

"Close-mouthed, I mean—can you keep a secret?" and I pulled my chair close to his.

"Colonel," said he impressively, "I've got a mouth I kin set a-goin' and go off and leave and it'll run all night, or I kin shet her up and you can't open her with a monkey-wrench. Secret? Well, I guess!"

"When will your cargo of fish be hove out?" I asked.

"To morrow night," he answered.

"Then I want you to buy fifty thousand feet of timber, and timber the hold of your brig so that she will not sink in any kind of gale—so that she would not sink if she had a hole in her as big as a cart-wheel! Can you do that?" I asked.

"If I could find a responsible party to foot the bills," he said, shrewdly.

"Send everybody to me and I will pay the expenses. How is that?" said I.

"That is business, that is," he said. "And now, is it any secret about what the cargo is to be?"

"Only eight or nine tons," I answered.

"Eight or nine tons of what?" he asked.

I leaned forward and whispered one word in his ear, and he sprang to his feet, saying:

"Slap me on the back, Colonel—I am choking! You ain't crazy, are ye?"

"The cargo will come on board as statuary and bronze work. You will secure it on the timber work, and when you deliver it in Philadelphia at the mint, I will count you down the price of your brig," I answered.

"Ye couldn't give me any little evidence that I beant dreamin', could ye—a little glimpse, for instance?" said he.

I stepped to the door and locked it, and then threw open the door of the office safe. It was packed full of gold coin in regular piles. I took out a handful, and told Smith to put it in his pocket. He turned white and sank down on a chair as I locked the safe. I had touched the weak point in New England character. The Captain had seen what all his life he had only dreamed of. Unlimited wealth had once in his life become a fact. He arose soberly, hid his handful of gold in an inner pocket, and at the door stopped to ejaculate: "*This is business!*" and went out.

"A note for Monsieur," said the concierge, laying a folded note on my desk. I opened and read:

HOSPITAL DES BERNARDINES.

HON.———:

Come down here as soon as you can. Captain Napoleon Smith was sent out by General Trochu on the last sortie before the surrender, and was seriously wounded. He lies here in his same old cot, in the same ward.

From yours,

MORTLAKE, Surgeon.

"What is up?" said Sturgis, looking at my distracted face in surprise, as he and Aimée stopped in the doorway.

"Of all the lucky and unlucky men I ever saw, Napoleon Smith is the most puzzling man I ever knew. Here he is in the hospital again with a bad wound," I answered.

Sturgis looked shocked. Then he laughed in a constrained way, and said:

"His adventures would make a book. He has seen more experience in three months than any man I ever heard of; but he is a brave man, and a man I love and respect. I will go down with you and see him."

Aimée stood with clasped hands a moment, then said: "He has risked much for me, I will call my father to accompany me, and we, too, will visit the brave man in his trouble."

I had already given up trying to understand a woman, but I thought that a strange speech. Sturgis whistled a sad tune while waiting.

Who shall describe Hippolyte Boh when he came back with Aimée, dressed for the street? He had a new uniform. His wound was so far healed that he had a new hat on. In his buttonhole was a small bouquet. He had his sword under his arm. He had the decoration of the Legion of Honor on his heroic breast, and beside it several other badges. Why this great parade? Because, the Marquis Larue and his son being dead, the claims of Aimée to the Brinvilliers estate, were to be passed upon soon at the Palais de Justice. Hoop-la! wounds are nothing. But hold! We are going to see the brave American, who is wounded, and he heaves a great sigh as Aimée takes his arm. Sturgis and I take the lead, and Aimée follows with her father. We meet the Doctor in the office. He looks grave, and says:

"Be seated; I have something to say before we visit the patient. You are all friends, I know, and I have a deep interest in Napoleon Smith. You, Mr. Secretary, are his intimate friend. You, Mr. Sturgis, know some-

thing of his wonderful career. Lieutenant Boh, I think you have fought at his side, and love him. May I go a step farther, Mademoiselle Aimée, and say you are still more closely attached to him? Shall I say you are his affianced bride?"

"Pardon, Monsieur Doctor, it is not so," said Hyppolyte, rising and bowing. "If Mademoiselle formed an attachment for the brave Captain when she was in private life, be sure, gentlemen, it was not the grand passion. Ah, no—it was what you call friendship. Mademoiselle is now the Lady Brinvilliers. It is far different," and the Lieutenant spread his hands expressively.

"Very good," said the practical Doctor. "I have stopped you here for a moment to explain matters to you before you see the patient. I will be brief as I may. At Gettysburg, in the United States, Smith was wounded in the head. It was not severe. He came to Paris last autumn, enlisted in the Guard, and rose rapidly through his courage and trustworthiness. Trochu entrusted him with a reconnoissance between the lines. He was wounded again in the exact spot in which he was wounded at Gettysburg. His life was despaired of in the hospital, as he had almost continuous syncope and paralysis. By consent of his friends we used the trephine and cured the syncope, but left our patient an imbecile, with no memory of the past. After weeks of this unconsciousness, I operated again, replacing the bone taken out by the trephine, and my patient became again a man, again went into service, and was in the sortie the night before the surrender. If this has been a long, tedious story, here is its conclusion: 'Truth is stranger than fiction,' because no writer of fiction can originate in imagination what may, and often does, happen in truth. In that last sortie a piece of an exploding shell wounded Napoleon Smith *for the third time in exactly the same spot.* All my work was torn away, and Napoleon Smith is again without memory, education or intelligence. He will live, but for years he must be educated like a child. He will

be brought up to the intelligence of manhood, with great care, in ten years. A nurse is with him who cared for him when he was here before. Now, if anyone here loves him well enough to lead him back to manhood by tender care, here is your chance. Do you wish to see him?" Aimée stood with her hands over her face, and tears streaming through her fingers. Sturgis was pale as he listened to the strange story. Hippolyte Boh was horror-stricken. I will confess that an uncanny feeling came over me as I heard that such a fate had again overtaken Napoleon Smith. I shuddered as I listened. When we all signified our desire to visit the patient, Dr. Mortlake led the way upstairs.

"Do not be any more afraid of disturbing him than you would be of talking before a baby a year old. He has about that amount of intelligence now," said the Doctor, before we entered the room.

How well I knew what I was to see! The same brawny form. The same smiling face, and—yes, the same loving look at the black-eyed nurse, who stood beside his chair. And she—somehow she was different. Her fierce eyes were subdued. A look of resignation was on her face, and an ivory cross hung on her breast, suspended by a ribbon. She looked up as we entered the room. Then she tried to move away, but her patient reached out his hand and drew her back.

Aimée approached near to the chair, extending her hands.

"Napoleon, do you know me?" she said.

A childish smile was all the recognition she received. With a sob she drew back.

"*En evant!*" shouted Hippolyte Boh to his old comrade. Smith lifted his hands and smiled as innocently as a babe. It was too much for the Lieutenant, and he wept.

"As I understand it," said the Doctor, "this man has no relatives. If he has formed any attachment to any person which would give them a claim upon him, I wish

to know it. Nothing but a supreme love can make the care of this man a pleasure as well as a duty. Does anyone here know of such a friend or lover?"

Ah! how well Aimée understood the words of Le Noir. She staggered back, and, curiously enough, Sturgis caught her and held her hand.

"Oh, heaven!" she cried, "I cannot—I cannot! It was the man, the hero I worshipped."

I saw the tremendous drama enacting before my eyes, and said:

"Let no one here make a mistake. This man, Napoleon Smith is richer than an Indian prince. If money can eke out the dregs of love, he has money enough to hire all the nurses in Paris. Remember that," said I, fiercely.

"Monsieur the Secretary must know," said Hippolyte, extending his hands in deprecation, "that it would be impossible for Aimée, in her new position as head of a great house, to sacrifice all for the brave Captain. Is it not so, friends? She must appear in society, you see. Ah, it is sad," and he drew back.

Sturgis stood silent, watching the terrible play of emotions, as a lover of sport watches the mad contest in the ring.

"It was for this I called you here," said the Doctor, in his calm, methodical voice. "You see the patient, you see the task, and the complications of love, interest and pride. This man was a lover who would creep up the gleaming face of the abyss to win a look from a maiden's eye. He thought no more of facing death in quest of his love, than he would to breathe the zephyrs of his American hills. He was a king in battle, but a slave in love. Now he is smitten down, and lies a noble ruin. Is there no gentle hand to train the ivy of affection over his blighted life? Warriors were wont to be solaced in death or in wounds by the ministrations of love at some gentle hand. This man was a Bayard, a gentle knight to us all, and now shall we cast him out to the charity of strangers?"

Aimée was crouched down against the wall, moaning: "I cannot, I cannot!"

The Doctor went on in his merciless address. "Then, I ask, is there no one who loves the vase for its fragrance after it is crushed. Is there no one who can see in the statue defaced and stained the outlines of a beauty once fashioned by the Master's hand? What! do we hate the mother when her golden locks are gray? Do we spurn the father when his eyes are sunken and blind? Does the mother cast away the crooked and deformed child when it yearns for her bosom? Is there no one who still loves the ruin of this brave man?"

Then the dark-eyed nurse with cat-like tread came and stood before the chair of Napoleon Smith and said, in a ringing tone and with extended hand:

"See, messieurs, I was beneath him, and a thing of shame. They called me Le Noir. I saw him strong and pure as a young god, and my heart went out to him. I tried to buy his love. He spurned me away. His pure, brave young life made me ashamed, and I plunged into mad crime to bury in forgetfulness my love. I followed him afar, and as I watched my star, it fell to earth. Its light was quenched, and I dared to approach it. Talk you of money? When no friend stood near I would have coined my blood in drops and doled it out to buy him painless breaths, and then when my treasury was exhausted, would have given my soul to win an answering smile. But again he went away, and spurning me, left my heart bitter. Again I tried to drown my love in crime and mad revelry, and then she, the pure maiden yonder taught me to pray to her God and I had rest. I would suffer in silence and seek in penitence to find my peace. Again my star fell, and again I drew near. God had heard my prayers—but hark! I ask something. I ask yonder maiden to make her choice. Let her say now that she will love and care for this man, and I will go away and bury myself in convent walls and find peace in secret prayer; but oh, if she will give me this poor

shadow of a noble life, and let us go away and be wanderers in the world—if she will let me lead him and delve in the ground with the hardest toilers, to win his bread, to be his hand, his eye, his brain, his all, it is all I ask—but let her choose, and forever hold to that choice."

"You hear?" said the Doctor, boldly—"will you make your choice, Mademoiselle?"

"It was the man I loved, not this wreck," cried Aimée, in a piteous tone.

"Do you, then, reject all the love of the past, and leave this man to his present fate and his present love?" asked the Doctor.

"I do—I must! I could not give him such a love as hers," and she shuddered.

"It is sensible too, Aimée, my angel," said Hippolyte. "He is not now an eligible party. Ah no, indeed!"

"Then, gentlemen, I bid you all good-night! Mr. Secretary, will you inform Mr. Washburne, and unite this couple in matrimony? You are all witnesses, and you are witnesses of a passion which you have read of, but never have seen before—a love stronger than death. Good-night! Magdalene—for that is the name she chooses to be known by now."

As we closed the door we saw her kneel beside the patient's chair, and kissing the crucifix, engage in prayer. When I recounted the scene to my chief, Mr. Washburne, I saw him wipe his eyes as a good, tender-hearted man should, and he then ejaculated:

"It is a proof of the truth of my theory of a double life that I was telling you about. Mark what I tell you, God knows what is best for us always, and Napoleon Smith has the wife set apart from all eternity for him."

CHAPTER XXI.

DEMETRIUS : A mote will turn the balance, which Pyramus, which Thisbe, is the better ; he for a man, God warrant us ; she for a woman, God bless us.

WHAT joyful preparations we were making for a return to the United States! We had received the *New York Tribune,* which told in graphic language of the heroic Washburne and his long and arduous watch at Paris, over the interests of his countrymen. *The Judge,* that new contestant for honors in the field of humor and wit, had come to hand with a laughable cartoon representing us at a restraurant table devouring our horseflesh, with the saddle and bridle for ornaments on the walls. Unwittingly, we had, by simply attending to our duties, become famous. In June we were to attend a reception at the Union League Club in New York city, which was especially to do us honor. The treasure had been gotton on board the *Amelia,* and was now on the rolling deep, on its way to Philadelphia. Our trunks were packed, ready for our rapid transit to Boulogne, Liverpool, and home. I will confess I had been studying Sturgis with a good deal of curiosity as we were preparing busily for our departure. His idiom of New England, which was so sweet to my ear, he had dropped entirely. His clothing was faultless, while the ridiculous beard, colored hair, and other accessories of his early days, had disappeared. Anger at times filled my mind as I saw the place in Aimée's affections so lately filled by Napoleon Smith being usurped by Sturgis. Lieutenant Boh had inducted him into the quiet society of the Quartier St. Germain, where he was rapturously received as the one man who had followed the heir of all the Brinvilliers through all her vicissitudes. He received this adulation calmly, apparently caring more for one smile

or hand-grasp from the petite Aimée, than for all the praises of men. As I watched the attachment growing between Aimée and Sturgis, I cynically said to myself, "She is a woman—what could you expect?" but this did not take away the sting of her ingratitude to one who would have died for her. I saw her furtive glances at Sturgis as his tone changed with his change of garb. The Lieutenant was also awake to the advantages of a good American alliance, as I perceived when he found Aimée and Sturgis together. Then, as I thought more deeply on the subject, I wondered if Sturgis had felt as I did at Aimée's abandonment of Napoleon Smith. But why should he care? It threw her into his hands. Such is the circular reasoning of love, no doubt; all is fair in love, if we profit by the change. And how many are there in the world who would have done differently from Aimée under the circumstances? Probably but few; so I smoked my cigar, and reasoned that the man who looks for perfection in woman, will go through life as I am going, alone, regarding women as beautiful ornaments, like the paste-and-sugar ornaments on a big cake at a banquet, to be looked at only, while we satisfy our appetites on the plain cake they cover; and probably the women who look for perfection in men will have to close their eyes often to the loved one's faults, and feast on the apparition they conjure up in their minds, or go calmly through life with an unsatisfied ideal. I often wondered if Mr. Washburne, so shrewd in his deductions, had taken any interest in the drama enacting under his eyes. He said nothing, but went to and fro, greeting all with a kindly smile. Lieutenant Boh would sit and sigh while looking at the attachment so rapidly forming between Aimée and Sturgis. One day as Sturgis sat at my desk writing, the rest of us sat apart engaged in conversation. Mr. Washburne, with a smile on his face, was listening to the girlish tones of Aimée as she told of the beautiful surroundings of her estate at Brinvilliers. She had hinted that a visit from all

of us at the chateau would be pleasant for her, before we departed for America. She was soon to be inducted into the chateau as mistress. In her pretty way she arose, and extending her little hand, said :

" You shall see my people on the estate. You shall see that they all love and respect the grand old family to which I belong. You think they are all weary of the domination of a higher class. Ah ! it is not so. It is the hard master and mistress that is dreadful to them. I will be kind to them. They shall sing again in the vintage time in the great park. They shall dance before me under the great chestnut on the green on the saints' days. Will you all come down with us for a day ? Monsieur Sturgis, too, will come," she said with a blush.

Sturgis was busily writing. He did not look up.

" It is a pity," she said, thoughtfully, " that the Americans have no great families—no noble blood, They are brave; they are strong, noble men. They should have titles and orders," and she sighed.

" Our great names our great titles, are better when we possess them, for they come from great deeds, or great acquisitions won by our own ability, courage or talent," said Mr. Washburne, thoughtfully. " We esteem great men more highly than they do in France, for with us greatness must be won—it cannot be inherited. Mademoiselle has often spoken of our great men. Grant was one of our greatest. He was a tanner by calling. Lincoln was great, but he was a farmer's son, in a remote backwoods district. France never had a greater son than our Washington. He was a surveyor in his youth."

Aimée sighed as she looked over toward Sturgis as he wrote busily at his desk. Mr. Washburne went on :

" We have men of great wealth. They did not inherit it. They had financial ability, and amassed it in trade, in invention, in masterly schemes of improvement, in railways, in steam boat lines. Would Mademoiselle think more of money inherited, than of money earned ? We

have great and rich men who amassed fortunes in medicines, even in soap."

Aimée turned red and looked fierce. We could see her wince at the word "soap." Mr. Washburne went on with a smile:

"Perhaps Mademoiselle would not like to marry a man whose bar sinister in his coat-of-arms would be a box of soap? Is it so?"

Aimée was weeping, and rose to leave the room.

"Wait, Mademoiselle," said Mr. Washburne, "We will not be too hard on you. Would you, before we part, be honest and tell us if you could love Mr. Sturgis just as he is."

"You insult me, Mr. Washburne," she said, angrily. "This is my friend, Mr. Sturgis. He is a brave man. I care not for his past. He knows I respect him, and the past will not raise any bars to my respect and friendship."

"Bravo, Mademoiselle! you are becoming now a republican, even if you have a fortune and a name. There is a great deal in a name," said the kind old statesman. "Now see what is in a name, Mademoiselle, I call to yonder man at the desk, *Nehemiah Sturgis*! See, he does not answer to that name. Now I will call again: *General Bickford!* See, he arises and turns around to answer me. He has on his shoulders a star, on his breast a golden badge. He is the Chief of the Secret Service Bureau of the United States. He has been with me all the time of my stay in Paris. He has been in the German camps; he has been in robbers' haunts; he has tried to carry away beautiful maidens who were in bondage. He has won the heart of one of them. He has sold a case of Sunflower soap and given away several thousand beautiful chromo cards and a few lithographs of wonderful paintings. Do you wish to know General Bickford, or will you speak to Nehemiah Sturgis?"

Sturgis, or the General, took out a handful of chromo cards and said:

"Yew never saw such soap before; it will wear out slower, froth up more than any soap in this 'ere store; no animal fats of dogs or cats; it'll poison rats; beware of cappers, save your wrappers, and git a picter of General Washington at Mount Vernon in fourteen colors—that is, the picter, not the General, is in fourteen colors."

We all roared with laughter. I was as much taken in as anyone. I took the General's hand and shook it warmly. Aimée was laughing and crying in his arms, and Hippolyte Boh was the proudest man you ever saw. He carefully unbuckled his sword, so that it would not trip him up; then he swelled out his chest and cut a caper in *can-can* style, stopping on the point of one toe; then he took the General's hand and kissed it. Suddenly he began to weep, and said:

"Messieurs, it ees magnifique!" and went out of the room to hide his joy.

Behold us an hour later packed in coaches on our way to Brinvilliers, Mr. Washburne and all. What pen shall describe the *boutonniére* on the coat of Hippolyte Boh! It covered his breast. It loomed up under his chin. It filled the coach with odor. You can guage a Frenchman's joy and hilarity by the size of his button-hole bouquet—that is, if he has money enough to carry out his views in regard to ornament. It is rather a pleasant habit, too, by the way. When we were set down at the park gate the whole population of the village was there to greet the new mistress, a genuine lady of the Beauharnais and Brinvilliers family. The detested Marquis Larue is gone, and the coxcomb Victorien is dead with him. Now the little stack of wheat will not be levied on for rent when the season is bad, or when the grapes fail they will not have to do without the black bread or the red wine. The older gray-beards have told the younger men of the good old days when the master and mistress had shared their misfortunes with them, and now here she is, the little woman who steps out of the carriage and

stands beside her father, the brave little Lieutenant Boh. Ah! be silent, she is going to speak. See! she trembles, but she speaks, Be still, Jacques, François, let us hear the little mistress.

"My people of Brinvilliers, we have been parted a long time. Kings have gone out of fashion, presidents and emperors have been in vogue, wars have ravaged the land, the aristocrats have died, the people have ruled—all these changes have taken place since a child of the Beauharnais or the Brinvilliers has ruled in the chateau, but in all these changes, through all these different governments, France lives!"

"Yes!" they shout. "*Vive la France!*"

"It is well, my friends. We have learned that prosperity comes not from a form or a name, that men live and die and suffer under all forms of government, so then good comes from wisdom, from kind hearts and willing hands. It is not, then, because in my veins runs the good blood of a score of generations of good men and women, or that I came down the line of aristocrats, but it is because I am a child of the same soil with you that I love you, because you are of the same families of my forefathers, that I put out my arms to you and say to you, love me, and consider me not a mistress alone, but a mother to your orphans, a friend to your poor, and an unworthy but loving descendant of those men who won with their swords these broad acres on which we are to live; for what says the noble English poet:

"'For hearts are more than coronets,'

and I am happy only because I am with my people again."

Then a happy shout went up from the people, and they pressed forward to greet her with touch, a hand-grasp, and often she drew down some motherly old face and kissed it, or touched her lips to the white brow of some fair girl. Yes, happier days were coming to the peasants of Brinvilliers!

Now a cart comes in through the open gate bearing a large cask of wine. On the cart is the old keeper of the cabaret. Here is wine for all who will drink to the new mistress of the chateau.

Here, too, comes the village band. It finds seats under a spreading tree, and laboriously tunes the instruments while laughing groups are formed for dancing. But now the Lieutenant steps proudly forward calling the old notary, Lebar. What is it? Why, the announcement is to be made that the mistress will soon be married. Clouds gather on many brows. A master—what will he be? They have not been happy in their experience with masters. The old notary puts on his spectacles to read the announcement: "General Bickford of the United States." It is well they say. He is a general. Good Aimée deserves a general. Then the Lieutenant proudly leads forward his prospective son-in-law. The old notary takes one look, then he takes off his glasses, wipes them carefully, puts them on, and takes another look. The crowd is silent. Jacques, the blacksmith, comes close and walks all around the smiling General; then the old curé smiles in glee as he winks proudly at the General. The little tailor squints a moment and commences to laugh.

"What is it friends?" cries Hippolyte, angrily. "Ha! I like not this. This is my brave son-in-law, General Bickford."

"If it is not Monsieur Sturgis of the yellow dodgers and the soap, then is my head a cabbage," said Jacques the blacksmith.

Then a shout of joy went up, such as is not often heard. The old notary embraced him, the old curé extended his hands in blessing over his head; then he was seized bodily and carried around the tree in a triumphal procession.

Aimée stood with tearful eyes a moment, and then told her astonished father that Sturgis, or the General, had been here for weeks watching over her while she was a

prisoner. Hippolyte was outraged in his finer feelings at these liberties taken with his son-in-law. When silence was restored he hastened to inform his audience that the General was at that time in disguise—incognito. He was with the American Ministry, a secret detective for his country. I am positive that General Bickford lost caste with the crowd from that moment. They loved the happy-go-lucky soap agent better than the great officer; but they knew they had a kind master—that was enough.

The banquet at the chateau that afternoon was an affair long to be remembered. Some of the neighboring owners of estates were present to do honor to the occasion. The great American Minister was the honored guest, while General Bickford sat at his right hand. The old curé asked a blessing on the feast, and the old notary sat at his side with a merry twinkle in his eye as he met the gaze of General Bickford. Such toasts to the new Republic of France; such references to Lafayette and Washington; such praise of Trochu and McMahon, were never heard at a French banquet, and never will be heard again. At sunset the party broke up, and in groups walked through the beautiful park. As our party of Americans stood together, General Bickford said to Mr. Washburne:

"You have never seen the power I exert in my peculiar calling. You know that I am at home in all societies—that I go where I will and take any character I aspire to—but you have never seen it in operation. The Secretary there has seen it, and been mystified with it. Let us go down to the cabaret and I will for the last time be the merry dealer in soap, the travelling man, the successful leader and controller of men. I feel sad as I leave this exciting life, so necessary to the well-being of society, and the maintenance of government. It was a pleasant life, but I am to settle down now as a steady manager of a vast estate, and, I trust a faithful husband

to the sweetest little woman in existence. Let us go down to the cabaret."

There were many things to celebrate that day at Brinvilliers What with the new Republic, the return of the rightful heir to the chateau, and the betrothal of its mistress, the merry peasantry had their hands full. Shouts of revelry ascended from the windows of the cabaret, while a continuous din of moving feet told of the crowd within. On this scene we entered, Mr. Washburne and myself in the lead, the General following. Silence fell on them all. How would the General act? they queried. Had he come to mar their fun, or had he come down to be once more the idolized Sturgis. He set all doubts at rest by stepping up to Jacques, the blacksmith, who was leaning against the bar with folded arms. The General said, with simulated anger:

"Where is the money I sent down to the carbaret to buy wine with?"

Jacques grinned stolidly and shook his head.

"Yes, I see, you have not delivered it yet. Ah, villain!" and he snatched off his cap and shook out of it on the bar a handful of five-franc pieces. "It is for wine," said the General.

"Ah, it is Sturgis again," laughed the merry crowd.

The General looked around a moment.

"Where is the little tailor? Here he is, and he limps yet from the blow of the sledge when Jacques fell on that dark night. And he has had ever since a cure for the hurt in his shoe, and did not know it," and he plucked off the wooden shoe and shook out from the toe twenty francs in gold.

Then what a roar of laughter from the merry peasants.

Picking up a pack of cards from the bar, he called to a man across the room to hold his cap. With a slight twirl he sailed every card in the pack across the room and landed them in the cap.

"He is the devil for tricks, that Sturgis," said some of them in a whisper.

"Where are the bees, Sturgis?" called the keeper of the cabaret.

"And can you tear again the curé's coat?" asked another.

"Let us sing again, my merry hearts, as we used to. Fill every glass! Jacques, sing the bass; Monsieur, the host, will ring in with his fine old tenor. What shall it be? Ah! I am a Frenchman now. Let it be, then—

LA BELLE FRANCE.

"'There is a land, a sunny land,
Begirt by mountains high,
Where purple vineyards thickly stand
Beneath an azure sky.
There comes no breeze to bow the trees,
No storms shut out the sky,
But zephyrs light from morn to night
Pass like a maiden's sigh,"

"Now then, Jacques, the chorus!—

"'It is the land, the sunny land—
The sunny land of France!

Her sons are brave, her sons are brave,
They quaff their own red wine,
Red as the blood they shed to save
This fair land of the vine.
On every vine the sun doth shine
In glory from above.
On battle-fields their courage yields
The glory that they love.'

"Roar it out, the chorus!—

"'It is the land, the sunny land—
The sunny land of France!

There woman's smile, there woman's smile,
Is like the sun's bright beam,
It will like wine the heart beguile,
And make life one long dream.

There let me live, my life to give
To make my country free ;
There let me rove, where woman's love
Can bring such ecstacy.'

"Now, roar the chorus once more ! It is my last song in a cabaret !—

"'It is the land, the sunny land—
The sunny land of France

A tear stood in the eyes of General Bickford as the strain died away. Mr. Washburne and myself were astonished at the great versatility of this agent of our government. He stood a moment in deep thought, then he said :

"My friends, you have been present at the last scene in the life of a great detective. 'Othello's occupation's gone!' No more for me the happy surprise, the wily subterfuge, or the shrewd game. I feel sad when I contemplate the change in my circumstances, If I am to be the master of this estate and village, I pray God I may be a good master. Let no one ever attempt to draw me into the sports of the cabaret again. It is past, but if ever a poor man needs a friend, or a few francs in money, do not be afraid to approach me. I thank you for your kindness when you supposed I was a poor soap-peddler. It was not thrown away. Good-night to you all !"

"Hurrah for the General !" and then a last bar-room shout went up. We walked slowly back to the house, and Mr. Washburne and myself took our coach and went back to Paris.

CHAPTER XXII.

FRIAR PETER : Well, he in time may come to clear himself ;
But at this instant he is sick, my lord,
Of a strange fever.

THERE was a strange fascination for all beholders in our little group on board the *Cambria* as we sailed for home. It was a bright June morning as we came up on deck the second day out. The beautiful bride of Napoleon Smith was of that queenly build and majestic carriage which show best in the richest garb. The raven ringlets, now unconfined, gathered in shining masses behind her pearly ears. Her complexion was of that ivory hue so often found in conjunction with eyes of midnight blackness and raven hair. Long black eyelashes dropped on the smooth, swelling lids, and let us describe honestly the most magnificent type of brunette beauty by saying that there was a shadow on the upper lip of almost invisible down, which lent the pearly teeth a charm and the red ripe lips a fascination which is found in no other style of female loveliness. One look at such a face is warrant of the form, erect, strong, and swelling into statuesque perfection at every point which garments suggested more than concealed. In the costume which unlimited wealth supplied she was of such transcendent beauty that when first seen men involuntarily stopped to gaze again, forgetful of rudeness, and only doing homage to perfect beauty. She knew her power, and her cheek just showed a suggestion of color, which faded again as sunset fades at evening. How shall I describe her voice ? It was a rich contralto, deep in her broad chest, and sweet as bells. You have heard such a voice—it goes with that kind of woman always. As you read Shakespeare you will imagine that *Rosalind* or *Anne Boleyn* had such a voice. With the fair soft

blonde we expect to hear the piping feminine voice, but with the queenly woman nature heralds her approach by a call as distinct and tremulous with vitality as the note of the brown thrush in June. I have never seen but two such women; one was the woman I describe, the other—but no matter.

When we emerged upon the steamer's deck she turned and gave her hand to one who followed her. He was as fair a man as she a woman. His chestnut curls were carefully dressed, and his manly lip was ornamented with a heavy mustache, carefully combed and waxed. He had on a rich half-military suit, and he moved with the regular step of one who has moved rhythmically for years to the cadence of bands, or with armed men in ranks. On the broad breast of his blue blouse were many badges and medals. Some of them were familiar, the dull copper of the G. A. R., the golden badge of the Fifth Army Corps, the Cross of the Legion of Honor, and a golden badge inscribed with the date of the horrible sortie in front of Mont Rouge. The beautiful wife places a chair for the veteran, then she sits beside him. She looks back with longing in the direction she believes France to lie. Then with a sigh she looks on, on over the long rolling swells of the Atlantic. The man beside her has no eyes for the grandeur of the ocean—he sees only the Madonna face beside him. He reaches out and takes her hand. Then he smiles with content. Oh, it was a picture once seen never to be forgotten. Such love, such trust, such fidelity! In her musical voice she says:

"Soon we shall see the land of the great rivers and of inland seas, my captain. Soon we shall stand on the soil of the Great Republic, the dream of the wasted toiler, the home of the homeless, the heaven of the broken-hearted—the land a good God dedicated as a starting-point for new lives. Let the ocean roll its highest waves between the old life and the new. On a virgin soil, we plant a pure resolve. There is room there, my captain, for the

penitent and the forlorn. America!—say it for me, my brave, my gentle captain."

"America," the captain says, plainly.

God bless America!—say that my captain," she says.

"God bless America, he says, in a slow, careful voice."

"Good! we will soon talk again. We will face the world, my captain, and tell them of the great battles, of the mighty deeds, of the stories of these badges on your breast," she says, proudly.

A noble white-haired old American watches the group from a distance, but when he sees the Grand Army badge he draws near to speak to a compatriot. He says: "You were in the Rebellion, then, my dear sir? I noticed the familiar badge."

The captain looks and bows politely, while a childish smile plays over his face, but he says nothing.

"Pardon me, Monsieur, he does not talk. It is the wound on his head there. You see the droop to one side. Wounded, Monsieur, at Gettysburg, America; twice again in the siege of Paris," says the lovely wife.

"God bless him!" said the old man fervently. "Excuse me, madam," and he took off his glasses, wiped them free of a sudden moisture, and walked away.

In an hour the pathetic group was understood by all on board. At the dinner-table a choice bouquet was brought from some source and was at the plate of Captain Smith. After that, on deck, the shady place was emptied and vacated for that little group. It is these fine little blossoms of divine pity in man that has relegated the doctrine of total depravity to oblivion.

One day, as she sat at his side, his hand on her shining coils of hair, she asked me:

"Where shall we go first, my friend, when we reach America?"

"We will go first to Sinclairville, Maine," I answered. "It is his birthplace. If any scenes will stir his sluggish memory, the scenes of his boyhood days will do it."

"Has he relatives there?" she asked.

"He has no relatives on earth," said I.

"Then," said she, "is there no one to step in and take him away from me again? Oh, Monsieur, it may seem childish, but my happiness is so great I dread to meet his old friends," and a tear started to her eye."

"Madam," said I, "no power on earth shall ever dictate to you again. You are his wife, and in America you shall do as you wish, for next to his God you are his best friend. I will not ask you to take him to his old home if you do not desire it, but it was his last wish to send a large gift to his native town. He loved it. It was his home."

"Ah!" said she, "I trust you—you were always and ever a father to my husband."

I suppose no one can tell what a foreigner's conception of America will be before he sees it. To most of them, it is a surprise. Its vastness, its wealth—its cities so much like their own.

When we landed at Boston and were sent whirling away to an hotel the beautiful face of the captain's wife expressed surprise. She found Paris on a smaller scale here in the New World. The tall houses, rich mercantile streets, and magnificent hotels gave her a shock. I saw that I must explain things to her before we reached our journey's end or she would be frightened to death. In our suite of rooms at the hotel I sat down to an explanation. Said I:

"Madam Smith, you will find a vast difference between our social methods and those of France. In France, the people transact public affairs with a force and vim, not to say excitement and display of passion, which we do not evince here. At table, in France, the people eat and drink to enjoy; with us it is business. I never saw two men embrace in America. It is possible two have acted that way, but I did not see it. At receptions, at great meetings, there is a president who acts as undertaker, and he

has vice-presidents who acts as mourners, while the person entertained represents the corpse. Every thing is done by committees—nothing is spontaneous. A club with us is a mausoleum where the resurrection has commenced. It is all business with us—serious, profound, and stupid. Toastmasters are appointed; a man is selected to make after-dinner speeches. Nothing is voluntary. You will see when we get to Sinclairville. If the people love you, they will weep—they will not embrace you. This is American enthusiasm."

She smiled, and thanked me, then said: "But is all this necessary? Can we not be private?"

"Bless you no. Fourteen reporters have already studied the register and asked for an interview. I will interview them after dinner," I answered.

"But it is horrible! Must they know all about us?" she asked.

"Certainly," said I; "that is best. 'Captain Napoleon Smith, a native of Sinclairville, Maine, a soldier in the late war, wounded at Gettysburg, has just returned from Paris, where he has served with distinction on the staff of General Trochu. He has made a large fortune in speculation, and made a gift of a million dollars to his native town, Sinclairville, Maine, for public improvements. He is stopping at the elegant and spacious Spraker House in this city. He was married in Paris to a beautiful French lady, who accompanies him. They will reside permanently in Philadelphia or New York. The captain is too severely wounded to engage in conversation, but we gathered these facts from the urbane——who accompanies the captain's party.' There. that will end the matter when it appears to-morrow in fourteen papers. I see nothing wrong in it. It stops all impertinent curiosity, and it is our way. You will like it when you come to form an attachment for it."

"I suppose so," said she, with a smile.

The next morning I telegraphed ahead to the authori-

ties at Sinclairville that we would arrive on the early evening train. I knew what the result would be.

When the train stopped at our destination and we stepped out on the platform a cannon was discharged, and Madam Smith for a moment thought of war. I said:

"It is in Captain Smith's honor. An American custom."

Four sober men in sober black conducted us to a close hack in waiting. We sat down inside, and the depot committee stowed themselves away, two on the seat with the driver and two on the boot behind. Then the village band formed in front, and we started. Ah! my fellow-countrymen, it was ridiculous, no doubt, but it was so American after our long absence that I wanted to get out of the hack, kick in the bass drum, and batter your brass horns into stovepipe in pure enthusiasm. With minute-guns from the cannon as a signal of our distress, and the band playing "Sweet Little Buttercup," we arrived in front of the hotel. There a reception committee of six awaited us. No word of enthusiasm, no embraces, no laughter: it was business. The reception committee led the way two abreast into the village hall, or opera-house, which was a portion of the hotel. Down the aisle we tramped, with the band playing ahead of us. We were placed on the stage in a conspicuous place, and as I looked at Madam Smith I could see that she commenced to appreciate the fun of the thing. When we were all seated a grave man in a grave voice nominated a president. Then a secretary was nominated. Then I almost expected the minutes of the previous meeting to be read, but instead the president drew out a formidable paper, fixed his glasses, and commenced to read a reception speeech. "There had gone out from us a youth, etc., and on bloody fields had won renown for the place of his birth," etc., etc. "On the tented field he had climbed step by step, but still he remembered the hills and valleys of his native land. Wealth had come to him, and in the gen-

erous affection natural to such a man he had remembered Sinclairville. Not in paltry hundreds or thousands—but a million! Acting as mouthpiece for this people, he would thank that man," etc. etc.

Now, according to the etiquette of American receptions, Napoleon Smith should have responded. Madam Smith looked troubled. I asked Napoleon to stand up. He rose, and his magnificent form charmed the audience. I said:

"My fellow-citizens: We appreciate this honor. You see before you Napoleon Smith and his wife. Napoleon Smith bears on his breast the badges showing his valor on many fields, but he also bears a wound that you cannot see which incapacitates him from expressing his love and affection here. You will believe me when I tell you that the evidence of his love of country and his love of his fellows is seen and proven by the silence compelled by his very wound." A tall Yankee in the back of the room arose and said, in a tremulous voice:

"Mr. President, I move that this 'ere crowd gives Captain Napoleon Smith three cheers."

It was the only spontaneous thing in the whole programme. Well, what cheers they were! The house shook.

Then the tall, grave man said again:

Mr. President, I propose that this 'ere crowd gives the captain's wife three cheers and a 'tiger!'"

The madam's eyes flushed with admiration as I turned to her and said:

"It is rough and uncouth, but God bless the American cheer and 'tiger!' It comes pretty near being original with us."

Then the band played while we marched down to a banquet spread below. While enjoying the banquet I turned to the President and asked what disposition had been made of the million dollars.

"Well," said he, "it ain't been disposed of. The Cap-

tain was unwise in leaving it for us to decide what to do with it. You see, a meeting was called and views freely expressed as to how it would build up the place best. The Baptists suggested a Baptist college and the Methodists wanted a Wesleyan seminary. This opened the way for the Congregationalists, and they proposed to build a preparatory school for divinity students. Hardness grew out of it, and Elder George Migley shook his fist in Parson Ackerly's face, and b'gosh he hit him biff in the eye! While they were fightin' in the hall the Methodists and Baptists tried to git a snap vote to divide the money and build two schools, but the crowd got back before the vote was took and busted up the project. The young fellows run out and got in a big crowd and proposed to lay out a mile trotting course with a grandstand and elevated seats, to build up the town. So it went. Several proposed a street railroad, but there was no place for it to come from or go to, and it dropped. Well, in less than a week the churches was divided, and all had evening meetings at once, and sort of divided the interest, so that the preachers didn't git enough at their donations to pay for the tickets. Everybody chose sides, and a new hotel was run up to catch the overflow, as it were, from the old tavern. I ain't no idea the captain's money will ever be called for, because the people won't ever unite on a suitable way to expend it. Why, bless you, one man wanted to build an orphan asylum, when there ain't ten orphans in the town; and when we expostulated with him he said it would draw in orphans from other towns and we could build up an orphan industry. Another man wanted to bore for natural gas, and start manufacturing, to keep our young people from drifting into the city, and so it went until everybody neglected business and wasted time to settle what we could do with that million of money. Of course, the Captain meant well, but his gift is liable to ruin the town or fit the people to go into a lunatic asylum and then take the

money and build the asylum. If he had give us two millions we would all had to move out and leave the town."

"Well," said I, "I had never thought of the difficulty in expending the money in a satisfactory manner at all. It is quite a problem. How is the village supplied with water?"

"Wells and cisterns," said the President.

"How would a system of waterworks strike you? An aqueduct, a reservoir in the park, pipes on every street, and the interest of a portion of the money to keep all in repair, with trustees to manage the funds?"

"Biggest idea out!" said he. "Make a suggestion of of that as coming from the Captain and it will go, mark my word!" and I may as well say here that it did go, and on a tablet on the reservoir the Captain's name appears to-day—his best monument.

"Well, the banquet came to an end at last, and we retired, weary but happy. I purchased a beautiful little cottage in Sinclairville and installed the Captain and his wife in it. What halcyon days awaited them after their long struggle with adverse fate! Napoleon wandered dreamily along the trout-streams where he played as a boy. Hand-in-hand the beautiful couple wandered along forest paths outside the village. On the broad piazza of the cottage, all that lovely summer, on sunny days, they might be seen at their tasks as teacher and pupil. Loving men spoke kindly words to the handsome wounded veteran, and Le Noir was too happy to be silent. Trills of exquisite song floated out on the street and arrested the attention of passers-by. Smith himself had reached a second boyhood when I left them in autumn. Was memory ever coming back? No one might say, but he stood there for hours and dreamed as he looked up at his native hills. What did it mean when he stopped suddenly at the call of a robin and put his hand to his head? Had she wakened an echo in his heart? No matter, they were happy—happy as we dream that angels are.

They were as guileless children, and when I left them I whispered a blessing on the Providence that had thrown this loving woman across the life-history of my friend.

CHAPTER XXIII.

PETRUCHIO: Marry, peace it bodes, and love, and quiet life,
An awful rule, and right supremacy;
And, to be short, what not, that's sweet and happy.

YOU will remember the opening of the Centennial Exposition at Philadelphia on the amiversary of our Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1776. On July 4, 1876, all the nations of the earth were invited to visit us and congratulate us, not only on the existence of the Republic through a century, but to sympathize with us in our just pride in the growth and advancement made in that time. Our two millions had swelled to forty millions of inhabitants, through immigration and natural growth. We had only ten years before emerged from a war almost unparalleled in proportions and expense. In that war we had stood alone. Not an ally on the face of the earth. Not a dollar or a man came to our assistance. In the eyes of the world we were on trial. The experiment of popular government was being put to the severest test, and men coolly watched what might be our death-agony. It was again the Pharisees at the cross: "Let be; let us see if Elias will come to help him." And the Centennial was the joyful resurrection after the pangs of political death. Who shall say that it was vanity when we had much of brass bands and booming of cannon. Gratitude to God can go up in one manner of voice as well as another, and a deal of ours went up in blaring trumpets and on the white wings of powder-smoke in the goodly year of 1876. Then it was, too, that the world stood in wonder as it saw a nation that had just retrieved from the field an army of two millions of men, that had just turned loose from prisons and hospitals a half-million more, and had buried in four years six

hundred thousand of the fairest and bravest of her sons —then it was, I say, that the world looked on and saw us calmly return to specie payments. At the gates of the Exposition grounds were boxes, and into these dropped a silver stream from morning until night. Here and there a youth stopped and took from his pocket a coin of gold or silver and gazed at it curiously. For fifteen years the rustle of paper was heard in the marts of trade, and that youth had grown to manhood without handling a coin of gold. At the mint the revolving wheels were grinding out a stream of twinkling gold and silver coins, for underneath in the great vaults were the vast treasures of another century loaned to the government by Napoleon Smith. Ah! there is a romance in history that only the few ever read. You will not remember at the opening ceremonies on July 4th seeing a strong, handsome man with a broad chest standing beside General Grant, who formally opened the Exposition. Nor will you recall the fact, so unusual, that on that platform sat a woman—a woman of startling and majestic beauty—who leaned forward to hold the hand of the handsome veteran that stood beside General Grant. You will know now who they were, and how much the prosperity of a great people depended upon what Napoleon Smith once called "only an idea." Credit was restored. Trade was quickened, manufacturing took a new impetus, and the buried treasure was scattered where its every coin was a benediction.

Captain Smith and his lovely bride were now installed in one of those magnificent villas along the Hudson which lend a fairy beauty to the American Rhine. Servants moved deftly to and fro across the velvety lawns or in and out of the conservatories of flowers. The Captain entertained only a few friends. He would sit for hours looking down on the white sails of the coasters, or the great masses of boats drifting by, impelled by the puffing steamer. Only for a time would he sit alone; then he

would turn and call "Magdaline!" and the sweeping of rich skirts would fall on the ear, and she would bend above him and print a kiss on his smooth brow, for as a child, a boy, a youth, he grew, and free from care, he had all the beauty of his early years. Thus another year rolled away in childlike happiness.

Again it is early springtime, again the scenes upon the river are panoramic and beautiful. With some light work in hand, Magdalene sits in a low rocker beside the Captain as he smokes and dreams. He is uneasy and restless now. He rises, paces to and fro, then seats himself and takes the strong womanly hand. He sighs.

"What is it, Captain? Why this heavy sigh?" she asks.

He tries to form a sentence; then he casts away his cigar and says, brokenly:

"Why this day more than another?"

"What do you mean, Captain?" she says, with a pale face.

"What is the matter to-day? Why do I feel so strangely?" and he looks eagerly into her face.

She nearly swoons with surprise. Then in a trembling voice she says:

"It is the anniversary of the day of your last wound."

He rests his head in his hands and tears flow down through his fingers. Magdalene gazes at him and freezes into stone. Then, that which she has feared has come upon her. Memory is struggling with the thick curtains of disease, and, striving to read them in order to get a glimpse of the past, Napoleon looks and whispers: "How long?"

She whispers in answer, while her heart beats tumultuously:

"Seven years to a day."

Then his head sinks lower and tears flow in a copious stream. Is it true that in seven years the entire person of man is entirely made anew? That every bone

and sinew, every cord and muscle, every drop of blood, every particle of the sensitive brain and nerve is created anew in seven years? That is a question that no moralist, no physiologist, no theologian can ever reconcile with the existence of a soul and memory in man. Where, then, are stored the pictures of our mother's face as we looked up to it in babyhood? Where are kept the memories of a musical voice that has been silent in the grave a score of years? Where were the pictures of the village green and shouting school-mates which now rise up in the memory of the octogenarian as he dreams in his chair, resting his wrinkled face upon his staff. Avaunt, ye howling, superficial materialists! Ten times the brain has cast its slough to mingle with the dust. Ten times that heart hath rebuilt its stout walls, and yet the old man in his death babbles as he feels with trembling hands the pattern of the bed-covering, and he babbles, too, of a mother he knew only in infancy. What then? Disease is the fog only that shuts out the landscape for a time—disease is the cloud which shuts out the sun, back of fog and cloud are the clear sky and the sun, and behind the raving of delirium and the babble of idiocy is the immortal soul—a prisoner in a tenement of clay, a watcher for the lifting of the curtain, a waiter for the coming of of the turnkey health or the freedom of eternity. Sad comforters are ye all who weigh, dissect, and analyze man, and then tell him he is an earthly vessel, veriest clay! Napoleon Smith looks up again, and again he asks:

"How long?"

She clutches her breast as if to choke the struggling heart within, and whispers in a choking voice:

"Seven years."

The curtain is lifted now. What will he see behind it? He broods with downcast eyes, while great sobs heave his breast. What does he see behind the curtain? Does he see a sweet, girlish face with wealth of shining hair? Yes. What else? He sees an angel of pity standing a

tireless sentinel beside a tomb where a noble manhood is buried. He sees long nights, with dim, low-burning lamps, waiting for the day. He sees and feels now a soft hand laid on a throbbing head and a soul looking out of loving eyes to watch the helpless sleep of an infant. He sees more than this: he sees a weak and trembling form led through a mist of fancies, led over a rough ground by a strong hand, and at last standing in the sunlight of life. He speaks:

"How long did you say?"

It is coming now. The curse, the rejection, the bitter upbraiding, and the search for the doll-faced girl; but she will turn to God and prayer. The voice is low and resigned now as she answers:

"Seven years."

He gets up slowly. He looks upon her, then he drops upon his knees and creeps to her. He takes that strong right hand and kisses it and sobs.

"I am a soldier. I will relieve the guard. You may come off duty and rest. Now, my love, this hand of mine shall lead you over the rough places of life. My eyes shall watch while yours close in sleep. Oh, my love, my angel! I have been dreaming for seven long years, but in my dreams an angel-face bent above me, and an angel kissed my brow. I have had a troubled sleep, but in my feverish sleep a cool hand pressed my head back upon my pillow. I kiss that hand. I have been buried in a tomb, but an angel sang at its door and rolled away the stone of death. Will my life be long enough to prove to you that this is the real life and the real love? When you doubt, lay your head upon this bosom and see if every heart-throb is not yours and yours alone. I offer you a love as deep and true as your own. Do you believe me, my darling, my angel?"

"It is too much. God is very, very good to me. Will you kneel and pray with me, my Captain, my brave, once more?" she said, and they knelt down together.

We leave them there where asylums for the weak and erring rear their walls to fold in to a new life the waste of society, you may see their work where the once slave cons his book with laborious utterance, or the weary sailor finds a calm harbor in age—in every good work the vast fortune of this loving couple is expended.

They showed me a letter from France a short time ago. It reads like this:

BRINVILLIERS, FRANCE,
June—, 1887.

DEAR CAPTAIN AND MADAM SMITH:

Our boy, Napoleon Smith Bickford, is growing to look so much like his namesake that we write to ask when he shall come on that tour to the United States. You will be astonished at his wonderful similarity. He has the chestnut curls and the acquiline nose, and, I believe, will have the carriage and physique of the Captain. You will love him! Will your yacht stop at Marseilles, or shall we expect you at Paris? We shall make the tour of the United States next year, and if it will be pleasant to you we would like our boy to remain until then. Travel will do him good. Colonel Boh has been promoted: he is in good health, and sends the enclosed flower from the button-hole. Cable us about the yacht. Aimée is so large and fat you would not know her. Love to all!

CHARLES BICKFORD, *General.*

When they laid down the letter Magdalene said:

"If her boy looks any more like you, my Captain, than does Washburne, our eldest, I shall be astonished. Aimée, our baby, looks enough like you to have been a boy. Well, and Aimée is large and fat! Ah, my Captain, are you not sometimes sorry you lost the beautiful girl?"

"Never say it again, Magdalene. I weep when I think that a doubt can enter your mind."

And he seized her, drawing her to his knee and kissing her.

"What a scene this is for married people of middle age to be presenting?" said the blushing wife.

I think so myself, and so I leave them. You asked me who was my friend, three hours ago. He stood at my desk, a tall, handsome man, with a sidewise droop to his head, and a badge on his breast. That was Napoleon Smith. That was my friend's story.

THE END.